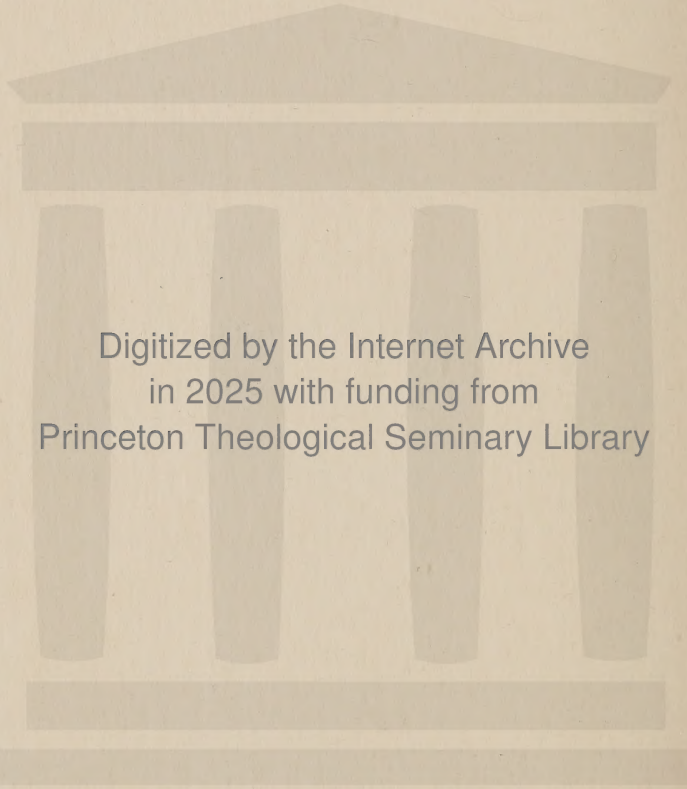
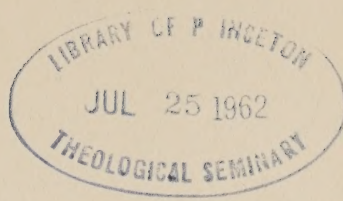


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*JEWISH CONCEPTS AND
REFLECTIONS*



Jewish Concepts and Reflections

by
SAMUEL UMEN



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To
the memory
of
Louis Sidorsky

whose cheerfulness, warmth, generosity, friendliness,
dedication to his work and devotion to his family,
constitute the monument by which he shall always be
lovingly remembered.

הֲלֹא־חָכְמָה תִּקְרָא וְתִבְינָה תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ:

כִּי־טוֹבָה חָכְמָה מִפְּנִינִים וְכָל־חֲפָצִים לֹא יִשׁוּבָהּ:

Doth not wisdom call,
And understanding put forth her voice? . . .
For wisdom is better than rubies,
And all things desirable are not to
be compared unto her. . . . (Proverbs 8:1-11)

FOREWORD

Rabbi Samuel Umen has written a fine and unusual congregational book. By congregational I mean that he has brought together those topics which, to my personal knowledge, those who sit in the pews constantly ask questions about.

Teaching is a very difficult craft. The communication between teacher and student is most difficult. To know what to include and what to omit requires a discriminating judgment; to be able to couch involved or complex ideas simply, requires something akin to intuition. All too often the professional scholar is unable to transmit his learning except to those who are his peers. Rabbi Umen has demonstrated an unusual knack in writing with clarity and with simplicity and yet without distortion.

This combination of vital topics and tremendous skill in teaching have produced a most useful book in precisely the age in which Adult Education is one of the crying needs in the modern synagogue.

Dr. Samuel Sandmel—Provost
Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am deeply indebted to:

Jean Blum and Eliza DeSchuytener, for their painstaking care and the many tedious hours they spent in typing the manuscript.

To my revered teacher, Dr. Samuel Sandmel, provost of Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, for taking time out to read the manuscript and write the Foreword for this book.

To my respected colleague, Alexander M. Schindler, for preparing a Guide to the book thus making the study of the various chapters much easier and more helpful to the reader.

Above all, I am grateful to the men, women, and the youth of the various Temples, Churches, and Colleges, before whom I spoke from time to time and who encouraged me to preserve my talks for further reference in book form.

S. U.

They are never alone who are accompanied
by noble thoughts.

Sir P. Sidney

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*JEWISH CONCEPTS AND
REFLECTIONS*

PART I

Jewish Concepts

JUDAISM DEFINED

WHAT is the nature of Judaism? What are its distinct characteristics?

“Once find a man’s ideals and the rest is easy, and undoubtedly to get any true notion of character, one must discover these. They may be covered close with conventionalities, or jealously hidden, like buried treasures, from unsympathetic eyes, but the patient search is well worth while, since it is his ideals which show us the real man as known to his Maker. And true as this is of the individual, it is true in a deeper and larger sense of the nations. . . . The national ideals must always be, to the student of history, the truest revelation of Judaism.”

Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people. Religion is commonly defined as a belief in a supernatural being, a common system of faith or worship. Such a definition may describe any other religion but not Judaism. For, Judaism is much more than a belief in a supernatural power, much more than a system of worship. It is above anything else, an attitude toward life, a way of life—a civilization. The dominant note, the chief principle of Judaism is not belief, not creed, but deed. Judaism as a way of life, calls for action—action in every sphere, every area of life.

The sort of deeds that Judaism expects from its followers are based upon the Jewish God concept. The God of the Jew

is a God of righteousness, "The holy God is sanctified through righteousness." The God upon which Judaism is predicated is a holy God—a God who represents holiness. "Be ye holy for I the Lord thy God am holy." Judaism calls for such acts which would reflect the holiness of God. God's holiness can be imitated through acts of justice, mercy, truth, loving kindness, etc. The way toward holiness, is through admirable conduct, according to Judaism. This explains the passion of the Jew throughout all the ages for social reform. He cannot help being concerned about man's welfare on earth; it is the very essence of Judaism.

Judaism, as a way of life, as a civilization, was never fixed for all the generations to live by. Since Judaism concerns itself with life, everyday practical problems of life, it therefore never remained fixed. Life is growth, change, and Judaism is life. Each generation adds to Judaism of its own life and genius. It draws from it new lessons for its day and times. Judaism is a people's religion, a people's government, an outgrowth of the people's view of life—approach to life. Judaism depends for its growth on the people, as the people depend upon it for its guidance.

Because Judaism is continuously growing, expanding, changing, unfolding, it does not claim to possess the whole truth or perfection. It urges that truth be pursued, that the striving for perfectibility never cease. Judaism is a religion of historical growth, which, far from claiming to be the final truth, is ever regenerated anew at each turning point of history. "When man was to proceed from the hands of his Maker," says the Midrash, "the Holy One, Blessed be His name, cast truth down to the earth, saying, 'Let truth spring forth from the earth, and righteousness look down from heaven.'" The full unfolding of the religious and moral life of mankind is the work of countless generations yet to come, and many divine heralds of truth and righteousness have yet to contribute their share. In this work of untold ages, Judaism

claims that it has achieved and is still achieving its full part as the prophetic world-religion.

All other religions, are bound up with, and are dependent upon, the teachings and the spiritual experiences of one individual. Buddhism is dependent upon Buddha, Confucianism upon Confucius, Zoroastrianism upon Zoroaster, Mohammedanism upon Mohammed, Christianity upon Christ. They are the final revelations of their teachings through these respective founders. But Judaism is not Abrahamism nor Mosaism, nor Prophetism nor Rabbinism. Judaism is the product of a whole people, the Jewish People.

While Jewish history reverently recalls its heroic leaders, inspired minds, its spiritual heroes of every age, no one has been singled out for deification—regardless of his greatness and contribution to his religion. Judaism is free from the worship of any personality.

Judaism is a religion of hope. Its hope and faith has always been that mankind can and will approach, in some future time, the Messianic age. Judaism is ever optimistic, ever confident that the ideal society shall yet appear, when justice will flow like a river and righteousness like a mighty stream, when swords will be turned into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks, when no nation will lift up sword against another, and no one will learn war any more!

Judaism is this worldly. It concerns itself with life here and now, with the building of God's Kingdom on earth. The apostles of other faiths thunder their message of saving the soul for the bliss of another world; the Jewish prophets thunder their message in behalf of social duty here on earth! Other religions promise reward in the bliss that is to come after death; Judaism offers its reward "so that thy days may be prolonged upon the earth which the Lord thy God giveth thee!"

There is a beautiful Midrash which explains why the Torah begins with the letter Beth, the first letter of the first

word of the Bible—Bereshith. "The Beth is formed closed on the top, closed underneath, closed from behind and open only on the one side to the front of it. And the Torah begins with the Beth to teach us that we are not to be too much concerned with that which is above the earth or beneath the earth or even that which is behind us before the formation of the earth. That which alone is open for us, as in the Beth—that which alone must be our chief concern—is what lies before us here on earth!" The aim and end of Judaism is not so much the salvation of the soul in the hereafter as the salvation of humanity in history.

Because of Judaism's stress on life on this earth, asceticism, so popular in other religions, could never develop in Jewish life. The Nazarite, in ancient times, who vowed to abstain from wine, had to bring an offering, because, as the Rabbis explain, "he sinned in that he wilfully denied himself" the pleasures of life.

The Rabbi in Yehudah Halevi's classic the Kuzari, succinctly presents Judaism's position on asceticism when he says:

"The divine law imposes no asceticism on us. It rather desires that we should keep the equipoise, and grant every mental and physical faculty its due, as much as it can bear, without ever burdening one faculty at the expense of another. . . . Prolonged fasting is not an act of piety. . . . Neither is diminution of wealth an act of piety, if it is gained in a lawful way, and if its acquisition does not interfere with study and good works, especially for him who has a household and children. He may spend part of it in almsgiving, which would not be displeasing to God. . . . Your contrition on a fast day does not bring you nearer to God than your joy on the Sabbath and holy days, if it is the outcome of a devout heart."

Now, like any other religion, Judaism has its special form of worship, its rituals and customs. These are the body or form of Judaism. The soul of Judaism is its lofty ethical

teachings. The body of Judaism like any growing living thing changes from time to time. Through the ages some customs and ceremonies have been modified, some dropped, and some new ones introduced. The soul or spirit of Judaism, however, is eternal, universal, and changeless. For example, the ideals of peace, brotherhood, justice, truth, etc., constitute the spirit of Judaism. Without these ideals, life becomes purposeless and worthless, and society a mere jungle. These ideals forever remain man's deepest hope and dream upon this earth. To believe in truth, justice, peace, and brotherhood, is not enough, all these concepts must according to Judaism be translated into acts. Thus we see that Judaism is more than a system of worship or belief in a supernatural being.

DIVISIONS OF JUDAISM

Reform Judaism

UNTIL modern times, that is until the nineteenth century, there were no divisions in Jewry on the basis of theological divergencies. There were simply Jews without labels identifying them with a particular brand of Judaism, and Judaism also had no particular labels attached to it.

That there were always Jews who considered one element of Judaism more important, more significant than another, who regarded a certain ritual, custom, or law, higher in the scale of values than another, is certainly true. But these personal evaluations, propensities, and preferences, did not divide Jewry into different camps, nor did it result in fragmentizing Judaism into separate and distinct types such as Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox, each representing a separate point of view, a theology of its own, and each claiming to possess the correct view as to how Judaism is to be interpreted and preserved for the future.

Time and again, the question is raised by Christians, as well as Jews, as to the basic differences among the different divisions of Judaism. Perhaps the answers set forth in this paper will be of some help to the curious, searching person.

I shall present first the background, views, and principles,

of the Reform Movement, because it gave rise to the two opposing factions to be discussed later.

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century, Jews were compelled by many of their host countries to live in segregation—in Ghettos.

Isolation for the Jews resulted in narrowness. They were cut off from the flow of new ideas, new trends of thought. Whatever cultural rays chanced to penetrate the Jewish community from the outside world, did little to alter or modify their set pattern of Jewish life. The more Jews depended on their own spiritual sources, the more congealed became their ways, habits and outlook.

After several centuries of confinement, of Ghetto life, Judaism certainly was in dire need of re-evaluation and adjustment. However, in the Ghetto, the challenge was lacking.

A spirit of liberalism and enlightenment spread in Central and Western Europe in the nineteenth century. "Liberty, equality and fraternity," were the watchwords of the day. The attitude toward the Jews in this area took a more favorable turn. They were granted citizenship and the opportunity of mingling freely with the rest of the population. This attitude of apparent friendliness toward the Jews was bound to occasion changes in their mode of life. They turned from their limited world of Judaism and directed their gaze and attention to fresh pastures. Instead of Hebrew, they now began to study with great zeal the language of the country which offered them their liberty. Instead of attending Yeshivoth (schools for the advance study of their religion), they enrolled in colleges and universities. They endeavored to take advantage of every opportunity in education, politics, business, craft, and profession, offered to them. They aimed to excel in every walk of life and impress their neighbors that they were worthy of their liberty and privileges—that they were truly equal to them in everything.

The desire to be like the non-Jews, the craving to gain

full recognition and approval, diverted the Jews from their heritage. They began to look upon their religion, their laws, and their practices, as burdensome and an impediment to their happiness. They felt that the Judaism of the Ghetto marked them as different and peculiar in the eyes of a Christian. This they wanted to erase and the quicker the better.

Some Jews, therefore, left the Jewish fold completely. Some remained Jews in name only. Others chose to grapple with the problem; to find the means of adjusting their religion to the new conditions.

In the spirit of old, scholars such as Abraham Geiger, Samuel Holdheim, Emil Hirsh, and others, undertook a careful study of Judaism, with the intent of determining what were its essential elements and what part of it could be either modified, interpreted, or completely eliminated. These teachers and their followers introduced reforms in Judaism. The leaders of Reform had one single, definite, aim in mind. They endeavored to preserve Judaism for the Jews of Central and Western Europe and adjust it to the demands of the times.

To the opponents of change, to those who insisted that Judaism must not be tampered with, that it must be left intact, that all of it was as sacred as any part of it, the leaders of Reform tried to show that Judaism was never static. Time and again, it went through change, modification, and interpretation, and if it were not for the changes made in the past, it could not have survived. Now, the Reformists argued, once again, changes were needed due to the force of events.

Briefly what changes did the protagonists of Reform propose?

1. They urged the shortening of the Religious Service and translating the prayers into the language of the country.

2. They suggested that music be introduced in the Synagogue Service.
3. They suggested that a weekly Sabbath sermon be preached by the Rabbi.
4. They insisted that the Rabbi be a college graduate in addition to his theological training.
5. They recommended that more attention be given to the study of the Bible and minimized the significance of Talmudic Law.
6. They advocated that the holidays be observed one day as prescribed in the Bible, and not two, as enjoined by the Talmud.
7. They showed that the dietary laws were not of the essence of Judaism and could be eliminated.

By adopting and implementing these recommendations, and others, an interest in Judaism was revived.

For some time there was no agreement as to the underlying principles of the Reform Movement. There were many views, conflicting ideas, in the Reform household, but no precise guiding principles.

In the United States the Reform Movement made more rapid progress than it did in its birthplace, Germany. The free American spirit was more fertile soil for it in which to grow and flourish. "All America was in a sense non-conformist. Such an atmosphere was ideal for Reform. Here Reform has grown strong."

A seminary to train Rabbis for the new Movement was established in Cincinnati in 1875. In 1889, the Rabbis were organized into what is known as the Central Conference of American Rabbis; the Reform Congregations were united in 1873, under the name of The Union of American Hebrew Congregations. And by 1885, a set of basic principles for the Movement was adopted at a convention in Pittsburgh, which

became known as the "Pittsburgh Platform." It reads as follows:

1. We recognize in every religion an attempt to grasp the Infinite, and in every mode, source, or book of revelation held sacred in any religious system the consciousness of the indwelling of God in man. We hold that Judaism presents the highest concept of the God-idea, as taught in our Holy Scriptures and developed and spiritualized by the Jewish teachers, in accordance with the moral and philosophical progress of their respective ages. We maintain that Judaism preserved and defended amidst continual struggles and trials and under enforced isolation, this God-idea as the central religious truth for the human race.

2. We recognize in the Bible the record of the consecration of the Jewish people to its mission as the priest of the One God, and value it as the most potent instrument of religious and moral instruction. We hold that the modern discoveries of scientific research in the domain of nature and history are not antagonistic to the doctrines of Judaism, the Bible reflecting the primitive ideas of its own age, and at times clothing its conception of divine Providence and Justice dealing with man in miraculous narratives.

3. We recognize in the Mosaic legislation a system of training the Jewish people for its mission during its national life in Palestine, and today we accept as binding only its moral laws, and maintain only such ceremonies as elevate and sanctify our lives, but reject all such as are not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

4. We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity, and dress, originated in ages, and under the influence of ideas, entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.

5. We recognize, in the modern era of universal culture of heart and intellect, the approaching of the realization of Israel's great Messianic hope for the establishment of the kingdom of truth, justice, and peace among all men. We consider ourselves no longer a nation, but a religious community, and therefore expect neither a return to Palestine, nor a sacrificial worship under the sons of Aaron, nor the restoration of any of the laws concerning the Jewish state.

6. We recognize in Judaism a progressive religion, ever striving to be in accord with the postulates of reason. We are convinced of the utmost necessity of preserving the historical identity with our great past. Christianity and Islam being daughter religions of Judaism, we appreciate their providential mission to aid in the spreading of monotheistic and moral truth. We acknowledge that the spirit of broad humanity of our age is our ally in the fulfillment of our mission, and therefore we extend the hand of fellowship to all who cooperate with us in the establishment of the reign of truth and righteousness among men.

7. We reassert the doctrine of Judaism that the soul is immortal, grounding this belief on the divine nature of the human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject as ideas not rooted in Judaism the beliefs both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden (Hell and Paradise) as abodes for everlasting punishment and reward.

8. In full accordance with the spirit of Mosaic legislation, which strives to regulate the relation between rich and poor, we deem it our duty to participate in the great task of modern times, to solve, on the basis of justice and righteousness, the problem presented by the contrasts and evils of the present organization of society.

Reform is always on the move. It is ever alert to new needs, new concepts, modifications and changes. The idea that religion must be of the people, for the people and by

the people, is uppermost in the minds of the leaders of Reform. When, for example, the "Pittsburgh Platform" was found insufficient, a new declaration, a more inclusive, more comprehensive, set of principles was adopted in 1937, at a conference of the Reform Rabbis in Columbus, Ohio. This declaration reads:

In view of the changes that have taken place in the modern world and the consequent need of stating anew the teachings of Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis makes the following declaration of principles. It presents them not as a fixed creed but as a guide for the progressive elements of Jewry:

1. Judaism and Its Foundations

1. NATURE OF JUDAISM. Judaism is the historical religious experience of the Jewish people. Through growing out of Jewish life, its message is universal, aiming at the union and perfection of mankind under the sovereignty of God. Reform Judaism recognizes the principle of progressive development in religion and consciously applies this principle to spiritual as well as to cultural and social life.

Judaism welcomes all truth, whether written in the pages of scripture or deciphered from the records of nature. The new discoveries of science, while replacing the older scientific views underlying our sacred literature, do not conflict with the essential spirit of religion as manifested in the consecration of man's will, heart and mind to the service of God and humanity.

2. GOD. The heart of Judaism and its chief contribution to religion is the doctrine of the One, living God, who rules the world through law and love. In Him all existence has its creative source and mankind its ideal of conduct. Though transcending time and space, He is the indwelling Presence

of the world. We worship Him as the Lord of the universe and as our merciful Father.

3. MAN. Judaism affirms that man is an active co-worker with God. As a child of God, he is endowed with moral freedom and is charged with the responsibility of overcoming evil and striving after ideal ends.

4. TORAH. God reveals himself not only in the majesty, beauty, and orderliness of nature, but also in the vision and moral striving of the human spirit. Revelation is a continuous process, confined to no one group and to no one age. Yet the people of Israel, through its prophets and sages, achieved unique insight in the realm of religious truth. The Torah, both written and oral, enshrines Israel's evergrowing consciousness of God and of the moral law. It preserves the historical precedents, sanctions and norms of Jewish life, and seeks to mold it in the patterns of goodness and of holiness. Being products of historical processes, certain of its laws have lost their binding force with the passing of the conditions that called them forth. But as a depository of permanent spiritual ideals, the Torah remains the dynamic source of the life of Israel. Each age has the obligation to adopt the teachings of the Torah to its basic needs in consonance with the genius of Judaism.

5. ISRAEL. Judaism is the soul of which Israel is the body. Living in all parts of the world, Israel has been held together by the ties of a common history, and above all, by the heritage of faith. Though we recognize in the group-loyalty of Jews who have become estranged from our religious tradition, a bond which still unites them with us, we maintain that it is by its religion and for its religion that the Jewish people has lived. The non-Jew who accepts our faith is welcomed as a full member of the Jewish community.

In all lands where our people live, they assume and seek to share loyally the full duties and responsibilities of citizenship and to create seats of Jewish knowledge and religion.

In the rehabilitation of Palestine, the land hallowed by memories and hopes, we behold the promise of renewed life for many of our brethren. We affirm the obligation of all Jewry to aid in its upbuilding as a Jewish homeland by endeavoring to make it not only a haven of refuge for the oppressed but also a center of Jewish culture and spiritual life.

Throughout the ages it has been Israel's mission to witness to the Divine in the face of every form of paganism and materialism. We regard it as our historic task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.

2. *Ethics*

6. **ETHICS AND RELIGION.** In Judaism religion and morality blend into an indissoluble unity. Seeking God means to strive after holiness, righteousness and goodness. The love of God is incomplete without the love of one's fellow-man. Judaism emphasizes the kinship of the human race, the sanctity and worth of human life and personality and the right of the individual to freedom and to the pursuit of his chosen vocation. Justice to all, irrespective of race, sect or class is the inalienable right and the inescapable obligation of all. The state and organized government exist in order to further these ends.

7. **SOCIAL JUSTICE.** Judaism seeks the attainment of a just society by the application of its teachings to the economic order, to industry and commerce, and to national and international affairs. It aims at the elimination of man-made misery and suffering, of poverty and degradation, of tyranny and slavery, of social inequality and prejudice, of ill-will and strife. It advocates the promotion of harmonious relations between warring classes on the basis of equity and justice, and the creation of conditions under which human personality

may flourish. It pleads for the safeguarding of childhood against exploitation. It champions the cause of all who work and of their right to an adequate standard of living, as prior to the rights of property. Judaism emphasizes the duty of charity, and strives for a social order which will protect men against the material disabilities of old age, sickness and unemployment.

8. PEACE. Judaism, from the days of the prophets, has proclaimed to mankind the ideal of universal peace. The spiritual and physical disarmament of all nations has been one of its essential teachings. It abhors all violence and relies upon moral education, love and sympathy to secure human progress. It regards justice as the foundation of the well-being of nations and the condition of enduring peace. It urges organized international action for disarmament, collective security and world peace.

3. Religious Practice

9. THE RELIGIOUS LIFE. Jewish life is marked by consecration to these ideals of Judaism. It calls for faithful participation in the life of the Jewish community as it finds expression in home, synagogue and school and in all other agencies that enrich Jewish life and promote its welfare.

The HOME has been and must continue to be a stronghold of Jewish life, hallowed by the spirit of love and reverence, by moral discipline and religious observance and worship.

The SYNAGOG is the oldest and most democratic institution in Jewish life. It is the prime communal agency by which Judaism is fostered and preserved. It links the Jews of each community and unites them with all Israel.

The perpetuation of Judaism as a living force depends upon religious knowledge and upon the EDUCATION of each new generation in our rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

PRAYER is the voice of religion, the language of faith and aspiration. It directs man's heart and mind Godward, voices the needs and hopes of the community, and reaches out after goals which invest life with the supreme value. To deepen the spiritual life of our people, we must cultivate the traditional habit of communion with God through prayer in both home and synagogue.

Judaism as a way of life requires in addition to its moral and spiritual demands, the preservation of the Sabbath, festivals and Holy Days, the retention and development of such customs, symbols and ceremonies as possess inspirational value, the cultivation of distinctive forms of religious art and music and the use of Hebrew, together with the vernacular, in our worship and instruction.

These timeless aims and ideals of our faith we present anew to a confused and troubled world. We call upon our fellow Jews to rededicate themselves to them, and, in harmony with all men, hopefully and courageously to continue Israel's eternal quest after God and His Kingdom.

Accomplishments

Reform halted a flight from Judaism. As of this writing there are 650 Reform congregations in the United States alone. Reform began with a spirit of hope and it is still motivated by this spirit. Contrary to the belief of those who view Reform from the outside, Reform Judaism does not possess an escapist impulse in its psychology. Reform was built up by those who were concerned with the perpetuation of Judaism; who wanted to save it and inject in it new vitality. "Reform was not motivated by a desire to make Judaism easy. If it were a matter of making it easy, then the easiest thing would have been not to bother with it at all." The Reformists were inspired by an exalted idealism. They saw in Judaism a great force needed by the world for the service of mankind.

"One must concede," says Mordecai Kaplan, "that there is a great deal of force to the claim advanced by Reformism that the very complexities of modern life offer the Jews an unprecedented opportunity to unfold spiritual energies latent in their religion."

Reform Judaism, more and more Jews agree, is the Judaism of the present, and because of its tendency to adjust to the needs of the times, will, therefore, also be the Judaism of our children—the Judaism of the future.

Conservative Judaism

In response to the changes in Judaism made by the early Reform leaders, loud voices of protest were raised. The representatives of those who looked with disfavor upon the Reformists' approach to Judaism, was a Rabbi and scholar by the name of Zechariah Frankel. Frankel contended that, while it is undeniable that Judaism has undergone changes during its long history, yet, the changes were never imposed from the outside. Change always came from within, in a natural, evolutionary way. Frankel's view came to be known as "Historical Judaism."

"Historical Judaism" had no positive program for coping with the prevailing conditions of the day, which demanded imagination, action, the adjustment of Judaism to the crying needs of the times. "Historical Judaism" failed to propose anything sounder and better than what was propounded by the Reformists. It simply called for holding the line, for the preservation of the status quo.

Not until the "Pittsburgh Platform" was adopted by the Reformists in 1885, did an actual cleavage occur between the Reformists and the supporters of Frankel's position, which in the United States was given the interchangeable names of Conservative or Traditional Judaism.

Under the leadership of Dr. Sabato Morais, minister of

Mikve Israel congregation in Philadelphia, the forces of Conservative Judaism began to act. The Jewish Theological Seminary was founded in New York City, in 1886, with Dr. Morais as its president. In his first report he said:

"At the basis of our Seminary lies the belief that Moses was in all truth inspired by the living God to promulgate laws for the government of a people sanctified to an imprescriptible mission; that the same laws, embodied in the Pentateuch, have unavoidably a local and general application. Those comprised in the first category lose their force outside of Palestine, the others are obligatory elsewhere; but both the former and the latter, being of necessity broadly formulated, needed in all ages an oral interpretation. The traditions of the fathers are therefore coeval with the written statutes of the five holy books. That these truths have not been denied by any of the prophets who succeeded Moses, that our sainted seers laid the greatest stress upon moral injunction, simply because ceremonial observances were mistakenly regarded by many of their contemporaries as an exemption from the principles of social rectitude, the founders of the Jewish Theological Seminary hold as their credo."

The man who is truly responsible for giving the Conservative Movement direction and definition was Professor Solomon Schechter, who came to the United States from England and in 1902 became the head of the Seminary. In his inaugural address, Schechter stated: "Judaism must stand or fall by that which distinguishes it from other religions as well as by that which it has in common with them. . . . Judaism is absolutely incompatible with the abandonment of the Torah. . . . We must leave off talking about Occidentalizing our religion—as if the Occident has ever shown the least genius for religion—or freeing the conscience by abolishing various laws. . . . There is no other Jewish religion except that taught by the Torah and confirmed by history and tradition, and sunk into the conscience of catholic Israel. The Torah gave

spiritual accommodation for thousands of years to all sorts and conditions of men, and it should prove also broad enough to harbor the different minds of the present century. . . . We must either remain faithful to history, or go the way of all flesh, and join the great majority. The teaching in the Seminary will be in keeping with this spirit, and thus largely confined to the exposition and elucidation of historical Judaism in its various manifestations."

By 1913, there were a sufficient number of congregations served by graduates of the Jewish Theological Seminary to form a nucleus for a national organization of Conservative congregations. The organization was founded by Solomon Schechter under the name of the United Synagogue of America, as "a union of Congregations for the promotion of traditional Judaism." The preamble to its constitution reads as follows:

"Recognizing the need of an organized movement for advancing the cause of Judaism in America, and maintaining Jewish Tradition in its historical continuity, we hereby establish the United Synagogue of America with the following ends in view:

- to assert and establish loyalty to the Torah and its historical exposition;

- to further the observance of the Sabbath and the dietary laws;

- to preserve in the service the reference to Israel's past and the hopes for Israel's restoration;

- to maintain the traditional character of the liturgy, with Hebrew as the language of prayer;

- to foster Jewish religious life in the home, as expressed in traditional observances;

- to encourage the establishment of Jewish religious schools, in the curricula of which the study of the Hebrew language and literature shall be given a prominent place, both as the key to the true understanding of Judaism, and as a bond hold-

ing together the scattered communities of Israel throughout the world.

It shall be the aim of the United Synagogue of America, while not endorsing the innovations introduced by any of its constituent bodies, to embrace all elements essentially loyal to traditional Judaism, and in sympathy with the purposes outlined above."

Schecter took occasion, at the organization meeting, to define clearly the scope and aim of the United Synagogue:

"Indeed, what we intend to accomplish is not to create a new party, but to consolidate an old one, which has always existed in this country, but was never conscious of its own strength, nor perhaps realized the need of organization. I refer to the large number of Jews who, in many cases, imbued with the vast culture of the day, have always maintained conservative principles and remained aloof from the Reform movement, which swept over the country.

"Unless we succeed in effecting an organization which, while loyal to the Torah, to the teachings of our sages, to the traditions of our fathers, to the usages and customs of Israel, shall at the same time introduce the English sermon, and adopt scientific methods in our seminaries, in our training of Rabbis and schoolmasters, for our Synagogues and Talmud Torahs, and bring order and decorum in our Synagogues,—unless this is done, I declare unhesitatingly that Judaism will not survive another generation in this country. . . . And it is for this purpose that this Union has been created.

"It's scope is broad enough to admit of the cooperation of all Synagogues that are devoted to the cause of the Conservation of traditional Judaism, whether they style themselves Conservatives or Orthodox. . . . Such cooperation should not be construed as the organization's approval of all those innovations which some of its constituent bodies may have introduced. The purpose of this Union is to conserve all those positive elements which they have in common."

Conservative Judaism views conservation as imperative. Only when the generality of the Jewish community adopts a new behavior, renders some custom or law obsolete, does the Rabbinical body decree the adoption of the new behavior or the abrogation of the old. According to the Conservative viewpoint, whatever observance is spread through the whole community, must not be abrogated by any authority.

All Conservative Jews agree that Judaism is a changing, developing religion, but they also agree that life itself, history, produces the changes and only after these changes are accepted by the people as a whole can they be legalized. In practice, therefore, Conservative Judaism is officially opposed to any changes in observances, in customs, in law, unless life itself has already changed them conclusively.

Conservative Judaism is, as a whole, Zionist, pro-Hebrew, anti-reform. It accepts the law as binding—the Oral as well as the Written. However, in its views on God, religion, revelation, Conservative Judaism discloses no firm agreement among its adherents.

Conservative Judaism differs from the Orthodox form of Judaism only in those external modernizations which modernist environments so subtly effect without changing the basic character of Jewish life. It is the English sermon, the beautifully constructed synagogues, the decorum of the services, the secular training of the Rabbis and a number of similar attributes which outwardly differentiate the Conservative congregation from the Orthodox, though today the newer Orthodox synagogues are hardly distinguishable from the so-called Conservative synagogues.

Conservative Judaism had its place in the American Jewish community. It filled a need for the Eastern European Jew who came here from the Ghetto, a completely Jewish environment, and expected to find a type of Judaism that would be recognizable to him. While Orthodoxy was available, many of the younger element soon realized that the Orthodox way

of life would not do. The new American environment pressed for a modified form of Judaism. Between what they held dear and believed in, and what Reform offered, was too much of a chasm for them to bridge. Hence, they associated themselves with Traditional or Conservative Judaism. That this movement still commands the interest of the children and grandchildren of the early immigrants is doubtful.

Of course the Movement exists and no doubt will continue for sometime to come, but that its present adherents are as far removed from Reform as their parents were is untrue. It is more a matter of sentimentality, loyalty to dear ones, or social reasons, that are responsible for the continuance of Conservatism. The practices, the religious behavior, the thinking, of the modern Reform Jew, and of a large number of Conservative Jews, are no longer as distinct as they were a generation ago.

In view of Reform veering toward the right to satisfy its numerous members whose backgrounds are Traditional, and because Conservatism is turning more to the left, it is my firm belief that a merger between the two schools of thought is inevitable sometime in the future.

History—external forces, coupled with the inner desire of the Jew to preserve Judaism, are responsible for the splintered religious viewpoints current in the Jewish community. The parts of Judaism in our times are seeking the whole. The former unity and wholeness of Judaism, will yet be restored by the same forces that have sundered it. It will be again the force of externality as well as the Jews' inner longing for oneness that will bring about a Judaism which will be representative of most if not of all the Jews. There are many signs in our day pointing in this direction and toward this end.

Orthodox Judaism

Judaism by its very nature is Reform. It never stood still. It is dynamic and forever changing. It changes continuously because it is more than a religion. It is a way of life and life is dynamic.

The teachings of Moses were far above those of Abraham and his period. The teachings of the prophets were more advanced than that of Moses. And the philosophy of Moses Maimonides, went beyond the views of the prophets. The Mishnah, the Talmud, the Midrash, The Shulchan Aruch, all these represent different stages in Jewish thought and Jewish life. Judaism borrowed from other peoples whatever was germane to its nature and whatever reinforced its own character.

Through its contacts and conflicts with the world's religions, Judaism was immeasurably strengthened and its character sharply defined. Like Jacob in his strivings, Judaism did not dismiss its opponents without wresting a blessing from them. From Babylonian thought, from Canaanite religious practice, from Parsism and notably from Greek philosophy, it derived the means for its surer adjustment to the mental, moral, and spiritual problems which ever pressed upon it for solution. In a measure also from Christianity and from Islam it has received some stimulation. Its character revealed itself further by that which it rejected in the rival religions fully as much as by that which it adopted from them.

Few Orthodox Jews are aware of Judaism's history. Most of them believe that the Judaism they are familiar with dates back to Abraham; that what they believe and practice are the identical beliefs and practices of their forefathers of thousands of years ago.

The truth is that the only time in Jewish history when Judaism became static was in the Ghetto. In the confined

quarters of the Ghetto Jews had little contact with the outside world and there occurred therefore, little change in Judaism.

Due to Emancipation, that is when the Jews of Western Europe were invited into the general community, in the nineteenth century, Judaism as in earlier days, and in other places, began to change and adjust once again.

It is at this juncture that the term Orthodoxy came into use. It was applied to those Jews who opposed change of any kind; whether it came from the leaders above, or from the people below. The organized opposition to the adjustment of Judaism to the needs of the times, was given the appellation of Orthodoxy.

According to the Orthodox point of view, Judaism is the revealed word of God and stands forever. The word of God, whether it is recorded in Holy Scriptures, in the works of the Prophets, in the songs of the Psalmists, in the commentaries of the Rabbis, is immutable.

In the Ghetto, Judaism was frozen, so to speak. It drew from the past. It stopped creating and rejuvenating itself. It stood still. "That is the great weakness of Orthodoxy," says Rabbi Israel Levintahl. "It has congealed Jewish law; it has in a sense, become a new version of Karaism. The Karaites made Judaism stop with the Bible, repudiating the interpretations and the development of the Biblical laws by the rabbis. The new Orthodoxy, especially in these latter years, regards Jewish law as if it had virtually terminated with the Shulchan Aruch—the code of Jewish Laws compiled by Rabbi Joseph Karo in the sixteenth century. In essential practice, this is a denial of the possibility of further growth or development in Jewish Law. It disregards the fact that the printed texts of the Shulchan Aruch itself contain annotations by other and later rabbis who differ with some of Karo's decisions and attempt to reconcile the Law with the prevailing customs in their particular lands or ages."

The position of Orthodoxy in relation to the changes that

were introduced in Judaism by the Reformists of the nineteenth century, was advanced and upheld by one Samson Raphael Hirsch. He argued that Judaism is not to be viewed in the light of reason as is done by the Reformists. "In nature," he said, "we accept the facts, whether or not we can fit them into the scheme of science. Likewise, we have to fulfill the divine precepts—which are ineluctable laws in the Torah—whether we have succeeded in finding out their meaning or not.

"Were every divine command a riddle which calls up innumerable questions that we are unable to answer, its obligatory character would in no way be diminished. There is but one answer to the question, 'Why did I have to do this or omit that?' Because it is the will of God, and it is for you to be the servant of God with all your power and resources, and with every breath of life. This answer is not merely sufficient but is the only possible one. It would be the only answer even if we were able to penetrate into the reason for every one of the precepts, or if God had revealed to us the reasons for his various ordinances."

Samson Raphael Hirsch's defense of Orthodoxy bears the name of Neo-Orthodoxy.

Neo-Orthodoxy is fully aware of the difficulty of trying to live in accordance with traditional Jewish practice now that the Jew must accommodate his work days and his rest days to the habits of his non-Jewish neighbours. It reckons with this fact by advising the Jew to do nothing about it and to trust in God. It insists that a Jew should be able to transcend the problem of earning a livelihood, for loyalty to the law of God places one within the domain of life where natural law can work no harm since it is subordinate to the higher law of God.

"Is not the God who ordained the Sabbath," asks Hirsch, "the same as the one who provides us with the means to live by? Did He not prove by giving a double portion of manna

on the sixth day, and none on the Sabbath day, that no one need be anxious lest through the observance of the Sabbath he be left without a livelihood?

"And what of the emancipation? That certainly is an unqualified blessing. For now that the Jews are everywhere 'tolerated and protected and even accepted as citizens,' for the first time since they have been dispersed, they have the opportunity to live the Israel-life in all its grandeur. Now most effectively can Israel teach the world by example the beauty of a life lived according to the Torah. If mankind were to behold the beautiful and serene home life of the women in Israel, would it be able to resist the beneficent Jews, the upright and kindly characters of the men and influence of such an example? Would not the nations in time abandon their evil ways, their glorification of power, their indulgence in lust? Would they not adopt the teachings of love and righteousness as set forth in the Torah?

"In the centuries of passion and scorn," says Hirsch, "our mission was but imperfectly attainable, but the ages of mildness and justice, now begun, beckon us to that glorious goal, that every Jew and every Jewess should be in his or her own life a modest and unassuming priest or priestess of God and true humanity. When such an ideal and such a mission await us, can we still lament our fate? But all this is true only when the emancipation is regarded not as the end of the Galut, not as the attainment of the goal of Israel's history, nor as the means for the acquisition of long-sought gain and pleasure. In a sense, the emancipation is a severer trial than the centuries of oppression. But, if properly utilized, it is bound in the end to bring about the final redemption when God will see fit to unite Israel again in one land. This realization of the future promised us by the Prophets will come about in due time, and for it we must pray and hope. But actively to accelerate its coming were sin, and is prohibited to us."

So today, Orthodoxy demands belief in the historic God of Israel and the expression of this belief in worship, scrupulous observance of the commandments of the Torah, devoted study of the contents of the Torah, and expression of this study and observance in action—in a pious, holy, and righteous life. The Sabbath, the festivals, the dietary laws—and all the observances and institutions of traditional Judaism must be kept sacred and adhered to with unswerving loyalty.

Even those of the Orthodox Jews who are Zionists have no use for the State of Israel, unless the Jewish life to be developed there is to be based upon the Torah, upon the Orthodox conception of Jewish life.

The Orthodox Jew looks upon the Synagogue as the center of his life, with home life as the foundation of synagogal Jewishness.

The Agudath Israel, established after a conference at Katawice in 1912, is the single independent world organization of Orthodox Jewry. Its rabbinical council is the only internationally recognized organized authority in matters of Orthodox Jewish law. It represents equally the Orthodox Jews of the Western democracies and those of Eastern and Central Europe and Israel.

Orthodox Jews in the United States are organized in the Union of Orthodox Jewish congregations.

The central institution of Orthodox Jewry in the United States and Canada is the New York Yeshiva (Rabbi Isaac Elchanan, Theological Seminary and Yeshiva University).

The Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada are organized into an organization called the Agudath Harabanim (The Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada established in 1898). There are also a number of smaller Orthodox rabbinical organizations in the United States.

While the trend today is away from Orthodoxy and towards Conservative and Reform Judasim, it would be presumptuous nevertheless, for any one to predict the eventual

dissappearance of Orthodoxy. One might refer to the Orthodox branch of Jewry as the proverbial "remnant." And because of its extreme view, strong unreasoned belief in its correctness, it no doubt will continue to persist despite its numerical weakness.

THE WORD "GOD" AND THE JEWISH GOD CONCEPT

THE word "God," which we begin to use early in life, is perhaps the most fascinating of all the words in our vocabulary. For, most of the words we use, describe something which we have experienced. For example, when the words table, house, bird, horse, etc., are mentioned, we recognize these objects from our contact with them in our surroundings. But when the term "God" is spoken of, it is hard to understand what is meant. Because no person ever saw God. Nor can anyone hope to see Him as one sees a person. Yet, we continue to talk about God as if we actually saw Him, or as if we could see Him.

If God is not visible to our eyes, why then do we talk about Him even as if we know what, or who He is?

While it is true that no one ever saw God, and that He cannot be seen, it does not mean that the word "God" is useless or meaningless.

There are many things in the world which we cannot see with the flesh eye, yet we talk about these things and know that they exist. An idea, for example, cannot be seen, yet no one will deny that ideas exist, that they exist in the mind. Desires, hopes and dreams, are not visible to us, yet we know that they are present in all of us.

God is an idea. An idea is a thought about something. In

our minds there are thoughts about God. What thoughts do we usually associate with God? When we consider beauty, goodness, justice, truth, love, sympathy, Nature, etc., we think of God. God represents many ideas wrapped up in one.

Of course people did not always think of God as an idea. Primitive man imagined God as a thing, or as a person. But as man developed intellectually, he began to think of God more and more as an idea. This is particularly true of the Jewish people—the Jewish mind.

The history of the Jewish people above anything else is the story of a people's struggle with the idea of God. Jewish history is the record of a god intoxicated, god thirsty people. As the Psalmist has it, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for Thee."

In their search for god, the Jews found many gods. They worshipped different kinds of gods. Their quest continued. Their notion of god, never became static. As they advanced morally, and intellectually, they advanced from the material to the spiritual, the national to the universal god.

In the vision of Moses, for example, God shows himself as "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy unto the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and unto the fourth generation." Amos' emphasis upon God's inexorable justice and Hosea's message of His unfailing love are united in this remarkable statement.

With the deepening of the conviction of the prophets of God's moral nature and holiness, the thought dawned in their minds that material likenesses misrepresent Him. The second commandment, forbidding the worship of other gods, was enlarged to prohibit all visual presentations of God. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Thou shalt not make unto

thee a graven image, nor any manner of likeness, or anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down unto them nor serve them." God is spirit and not flesh (Isaiah 31:3). Hidden from the human eye, He reveals Himself to the inner vision of the prophets.

The Jew did not concern himself with theological speculations as to what God is, which he realized his mind could never fathom; he concerned himself only with what God wills, with what God demands! "If I could describe God," said Moses Maimonides, "He would not be God!"

"For Judaism," says Ahad Ha-am, "God is the only ideal of absolute perfection, and He only must be kept always before the eye of man's inner consciousness, in order that man may 'cleave to his attributes.' No man, not even the most perfect, is free from shortcomings and sins; no man can serve as an ideal for the religious sentiment, which strives after union with the source of perfection. Moses died in his sin, like any other man. He was simply God's messenger, charged with the giving of His Law; his image is not an essential part of the very fabric of the religion. Thus the Jewish teachers of a later period found nothing to shock them in the words of one who said in all simplicity: 'Ezra was worthy to be the bearer of the Law to Israel, had not Moses come before him'" (Sanhedrin, 21a).

If we agree that God is an idea which stands for all that is true, beautiful and good, then He serves as a symbol, as a goal, the greatest of all symbols and goals for every human being to be inspired by and strive for. "Ye shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy."

The God symbol, the God idea, speaks to us as it were, saying, "Perfect yourself! Be kind, generous, loving, helpful, useful!"

After all, do we not copy a design for a home from those of the great architects? Do not the ones who study art, or

music, strive to be like the greatest in these fields? By the same token, the God idea continuously urges each and every one of us to develop within himself all these fine qualities which are included in it. As it is said in Jeremiah (Chapter 9:22),

“Thus saith the Lord:

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,
Neither let the mighty man glory in his might,
Let not the rich man glory in his riches;
But let him that glorieth glory in this,
That he understandeth, and knoweth me,
That I am the Lord who exercise mercy,
Justice, and righteousness, in the earth.”

Why do we learn to use the word “God” at a very early age? Because the God idea is part of us, part of our growing up. It is an aid, a guide for our proper development. No, we do not see God. But we know that God is man’s most perfect symbol constantly reminding him that his business in life is never to be satisfied with what he is, and with what he does, but that he must ceaselessly try to come closer to what God is—or better said what He demands.

The Bible records Moses saying to God, “Show me I pray Thee, Thy glory,” God’s reply was, “Man shall not see Me and live!” This is to teach that God is impenetrable. However, Moses made a second request: “Show me Thy ways that I may know Thee.” This request is granted as God reveals himself before him in his moral attributes.

ETHICS AND THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF ETHICS

ETHICS is the science that deals with conduct, in so far as this is considered as right or wrong, good or bad. A single term for conduct so considered is "moral conduct," or the moral life.

The terms "ethics" and "ethical" are derived from a Greek word ETHOS, which originally meant customs, usages, especially those belonging to some group as distinguished from another, and later came to mean disposition, character. They are thus like the Latin word "moral" from MORES. Ethics involves our philosophy of life; it touches every question of religion; it also presides over the details of each man's daily conduct.

Our happiness, our existence, all that makes life worth living, depends on the conduct of the people with whom we are in daily contact, on the multitudes also beyond our sight—but whose acts may change the course of civilization. It is not enough to know what they are doing; it is necessary to surmise what they intend, what they desire, what ideals are in their minds. The study of ethics is the study of nothing less profound than the depths and heights of human nature.

Behind the surface of man's conduct, we distinguish in general three different attitudes in which they stand to one another. One attitude is that of antagonism, or dislike or suspicion.

A second attitude in which men stand to each other is indifference. Men daily look others in the face for whom they do not care. They rub against their fellows in the streets, as if they were all so many pests. They live as if the others, their neighbors on the same street did not exist. They may even do business with one another, and be devoid of personal human feeling. In short they are indifferent to one another.

A third attitude in which men stand to one another is friendliness or good will. This is evidently a normal attitude. The natural tendency always is, as fast as men know each other, or wherever they work for a common cause, to discover in one another the ethical marks of more or less worth, and to respect and like one another accordingly.

[The study of ethics is simply the highest form of the study of human nature.]

The problem of religion is how to teach love and justice in an effective manner, to men whose attitude is indifference, self-complacency; how to fight malice, hatred, and antagonism of man against man and race against race.

Western Religion has not succeeded too well in influencing man morally or ethically. Because throughout its history Western religion concerned itself more with the world beyond, instead of this world; with the hereafter rather than the here and now; with the subjective love of Christ rather than the objective love of man. The emphasis was largely on creed. "Believe and you will be saved!"

Jewish Ethics

Unlike the Greeks, the Jews did not produce a system of ethics. But there is little that can be added to the ethics of Judaism that would enhance its scope, its profundity, and its universality.

Jewish ethics flows from the Jewish religion—from Judaism. Judaism is above all else a religion of ethics. It could not be anything else because Judaism as a religion concerns itself with this world, the problems of men, everyday life. Judaism is a way of life, a way for the moral and ethical life. "The divine test of a man's worth is not his theology but his life," says Morris Joseph in his "Judaism as Creed and Life."

Because Judaism is chiefly a religion based on deed, on a way of life, it does not demand belief of its adherents. Lo Hamidrosch ikor elo Ha-maaseh—"Not what one preaches but what he practices is what counts." According to Judaism, belief is determined by one's life, by his acts, his deeds, as indicated by the Midrashik assertion: "Would that they had forsaken Me, but observed My commandments."

The Jewish idea of God is not one that is imposed by any outside authority upon the Jew. It is an idea which stems from the congregation of Israel. The Jewish God concept is not a purely metaphysical concept. The Jewish God concept is the Jewish way of life—and is the core of Jewish ethics. As God is One according to Judaism, so there can only be one moral law for all, and all are the children of the One and under His rule.

In accepting God's law, the Jew recognizes in it his own deepest need. It is the law of his own being. As Scripture has it: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee. Neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us hear it, that we may do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea that thou shouldst say: 'Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us and make us hear it, that we may do it?' But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

Jewish ethics, emanating from the One God idea, makes

its appeal to all of God's children. "The ethics of Judaism is dominated by the principle of universalism, that is, it knows no difference in its requirements and regulations between Jew and non-Jew. What it commands applies universally. Any separation of men according to descent and belief into classes or nationalities or races or religions is meaningless for it. It would be not only to defame, but completely to misconstrue Jewish ethics, were one to assume that it attributes a greater binding force to the commandments of righteousness, truth, and love, where some question among Jews themselves is at issue than where the claims of those of other faiths have to be taken into consideration."

"Justice, Justice shalt thou pursue," says Scripture. "Why," ask the Rabbis "is the word justice written twice? To teach us that we must practice justice at all times, whether it be for our profit or for our loss, and towards all men—towards Jews and non-Jews alike!"

The Rabbinical literature teems with statements emphasizing the universal character of the Jewish law. We are told that the Torah was given in the desert, in no man's land, so that he who would could come and accept. It was not intended to be limited to any people, country, or nation. What could be more universal than the expression by the Prophet Micah who in his most famous passage practically sums up Judaism, Jewish ethics: "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." Or, as Malachai (2:10) has it in his appeal for Brotherhood:

"Have we not all one Father
Hath not one God created us?
Why do we deal treacherously every
man against his brother,
Profaning the covenant of our fathers?"

Brotherhood, according to Judaism, was not meant to be a yearly meeting by leaders of the dominant faiths, exchanging good will remarks at planned dinners. The doctrine of the Brotherhood of man, in Jewish ethics was wedded to the obligation of universal benevolence. It was expressed in legislation regarding the treatment of the indigent, the handicapped, and the stranger. In Leviticus 19 there are these laws: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart . . ." "Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (vss. 17-18). These laws not only apply to a brother Jew but also to a stranger as made clear by the commandment: "The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home-born among you, and thou shalt love him as thy self; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:34).

The Group

Jewish ethics addresses itself primarily to the group, for only in the group and through it can one fulfill himself. The Torah is given to all the Jews. All received it at Sinai. It is a law unto all, to the whole community. The ethics of Judaism is social ethics. "All Israelites are mutually accountable for each other." In a boat at sea one of the men began to bore a hole in the bottom of the boat. On being remonstrated with, he answered: "I am only boring under my own seat." "Yes," said his comrades, "but when the sea rushes in we shall all be drowned with you." So it is with Israel. Its weal or its woe is in the hands of every individual Israelite. While individual responsibility is always emphasized, the morality of the individual is always determined by his feeling of social solidarity. Responsibility is always conceived as social as well as individual.

"The individual man never stands alone . . . As a moral being he may not and should not isolate himself. He who aims to be self sufficient, who refers all things to himself alone, is not called man. Whatever morality may demand of man, is demanded in the spirit, in the service, and for the purpose of human society. The notion of morality is at bottom the notion of moral society. Within the Jewish domain ethics is social ethics."

The social character of Jewish ethics is eloquently expressed by the words of Job, when he pleads his innocence and points to the realization of the ideal life. He says of himself, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness unto me; because I delivered the poor that cried, the fatherless also that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy, I put on righteousness and it clothed itself with me; my justice was a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy; and the cause of him that I knew not I searched out. And I broke the jaws of the unrighteous, and I plucked the prey out of his teeth . . ." Walter Eichrodt, in his book "Man in the Old Testament," says: "It may be affirmed without exaggeration that in no other people of the ancient East is the sense of responsibility of each member of the people so living, and the personal attitude so dominant."

Zdakah

The heart of Jewish ethics is Zdakah—justice. When we give a poor man charity, or help him in any way, we are not to consider ourselves as generous or charitable. In Judaism, there is no word for charity. Helping the needy is man's responsibility to his fellow man. In executing his responsibility, he dispenses justice, not charity. The highest

form of justice, according to Judaism, is that which helps a man to stand on his own feet, which makes him self sufficient—self supporting.

Freedom of Choice

Action, the right kind of action presupposes freedom of will. Man, according to Judaism, has free will. "I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life." Man has the power to choose. "We are free, and can by the exercise of our own faculties battle our way through to moral perfection, because we are made in the likeness of God and created in His image. Even after when we have sinned, we have not incurred thereby the loss of our moral freedom. We are still able to extricate ourselves from the power of sin and to repattern our lives to correspond with the image of God which we bear" (Guttmann). When one subordinates his impulses, that is the natural man, or transforms it, by doing a good deed, by realizing an ethical ideal, by performing a moral commandment, he rises above the animal; he uses his freedom and acts as a free agent. Man is conceived as in possible bondage to his natural passions, instincts and desires, which he has in common with the animal creation. He is also conceived as having the ability to redeem himself from his inner enslavement and become master of his nature, master of his destiny. This mastery he obtains from God's law.

The Nature of Jewish Ethics

Jewish ethics may be said to be optimistic. For Judaism, the source of Jewish ethics—is a religion which inspires faith in man, faith in the future. Judaism looks to a world free from hate, superstition, and disunity. The Messianic idea in Judaism symbolizes the Jews' belief in a Golden Age yet to be, "when

nation shall not lift sword against nation," and when hearts and hands will be joined together to build God's Kingdom here on earth.

The faith and the optimism of Jewish ethics is beautifully summed up in the adoration prayer of the Union Prayer Book:

"O may all created in Thine image recognize that they are brethren, so that, one in spirit and one in fellowship, they may be forever united before Thee. Then shall Thy Kingdom be established on earth and the word of Thine ancient seer be fulfilled: The Lord will reign forever and ever. On that day shall the Lord be one and His name shall be One."

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF HOLINESS

MODERN man does not concern himself with the idea of holiness. It is a word, which he brands as obsolete, belonging to antiquity. If on occasions the idea of holiness crops up in the mind of modern man, he associates the idea with outmoded symbols, the impractical, and the mystical.

In Judaism, the concept of holiness is considered as a major aspect of every day living, a force for good, an influence much desired at all times. Concepts depend upon our perception and use of them.

Since the rise of Judaism, throughout the whole course of its development, the notion of holiness, has been its basic doctrine.

Judaism makes a distinction between two types of holiness: holiness related to ritual, places, persons or things, which is categorized as priestly or external holiness, and that of ethical or moral holiness.

Ritual holiness is a sort of imposed sanctity. It depends upon ordinances, proclamations and declarations. This type of holiness does not grow out of the essence of the thing or things.

The idea of holiness in an ethical sense, flows from the innermost essence, from the quality of the thing itself. Ethical holiness means the perfection of morality.

In its broad aspects holiness is but another word for *IMITATIO DEI*, a duty intimately associated with Israel's

close relationship with God. The most frequent name for God in the Rabbinic literature is "the Holy One," and so Israel is also called holy. But the holiness of Israel is dependent on their acting in such a way as to become God-like. "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord am holy" (Lev., 19-2).

The imitation of God, receives practical meaning in the following passage: "The members of the house of Israel are in duty bound to deal with one another mercifully, to do charity, and to practice kindness. For the Holy One, blessed be He, has only created this world with loving kindness and mercy, and it rests with us to learn from the ways of God."

The concept of imitation is expressed more forcefully in this passage: "The Holy One, blessed be He, ordained that man should cleave to His ways, as it is written, 'Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, Him shalt thou serve and to Him shalt thou cleave' (Deut. 10-19). But how can man cleave to (Him!) the SHECHINAH? Is it not written, 'For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, a jealous God'? (Deut. 4-24). But cleave to His ways: as God nurses the sick, so do thou nurse the sick, and so forth."

Holiness, as urged by the prophets, interpreted by the sages, explained by the Rabbis, is not a metaphysical concept, but the main principle and source of Jewish ethics.

In Judaism ethics and holiness are intertwined. It is impossible from the Jewish point of view to speak of ethics and at the same time exclude holiness from its content. For ethics in Judaism refers to acts that are pleasing, beneficial, worthy. Such acts are simultaneously regarded as holy.

"If the rabbis," says Kaufman Kohler, "as followers of the Priestly Code were compelled to lay great stress upon ritual holiness, they yet beheld in it the means of moral purification. They never lost sight of the prophetic principle that moral purity is the object of all human life, for 'the holy God' is sanctified through righteousness."

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

ALL human beings are equal. They are equal in the sense that they are human beings; that they are governed by the same laws of nature pertaining to human beings; that their basic hopes and dreams, worries and fears, pains and suffering, are more or less the same. Spiritually, however, human beings are not equal. Some are gifted in one way, some in another, and some not at all. As individuals, so nations, differ from one another by their spiritual make-up.

Israel, from its very infancy manifested a strong desire to know God. No people in the world was so God centered, God intoxicated as Israel. When the Psalmist sang, "MY SOUL THIRSTS FOR THEE," he uttered Israel's search for God through the ages. It was Israel and Israel alone that was able by its deep spirituality to distinguish God from the gods, to sense God's will and way from the ways that were prevalent among the peoples of the world. No other but Israel proclaimed God's word, God's law unto mankind, "WHILE OTHER NATIONS," wrote Mathew Arnold, "HAD THE MISLEADING IDEA THAT THIS OR THAT, OTHER THAN RIGHTEOUSNESS IS SAVING, AND IT IS NOT: THAT THIS OR THAT, OTHER THAN CONDUCT, BRINGS HAPPINESS, AND IT DOES NOT,—ISRAEL HAD THE TRUE IDEA THAT *RIGHTEOUSNESS* IS SAVING AND THAT TO CONDUCT BE-

LONGS HAPPINESS. HEREIN ISRAEL STOOD ALONE, THE FRIEND AND THE ELECT OF THE ETERNAL. AS LONG AS THE WORLD LASTS, ALL WHO WANT TO MAKE PROGRESS IN RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL COME TO ISRAEL FOR INSPIRATION, AS TO THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD THE SENSE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS MOST GLOWING AND STRONGEST. THIS DOES TRULY CONSTITUTE FOR ISRAEL A MOST EXTRAORDINARY DISTINCTION."

Israel's search for God, their recognition of the God of truth and justice, the God of ethics and morality, the one God, is what singles out Israel from among the nations as a people with a special gift for religion, as a God conscious people from its very beginning. As Jeremiah says in the name of God, "BEFORE I FORMED THEE IN THE BELLY I KNEW THEE. AND BEFORE THOU CAMEST FORTH OUT OF THE WOMB I SANCTIFIED THEE: I HAVE APPOINTED THEE A PROPHET UNTO THE NATIONS" (Jer. 1-4, 5).

There are many Jews in our day who discredit the idea of chosenness. Israel, they argue, is no better and no worse than the rest of the people of the world. Furthermore, claiming election, they say, breeds contempt, inspires hate. They bring up the race superiority claim of the Aryans and shout: "We do not want any part of such theories." These arguments, of course, are based upon fear and ignorance.

The election of Israel, needs to be understood as a people's deep feeling of responsibility to do what is right, just, and proper; to act in the name of God, to carry out His will for their own satisfaction and happiness, as well as serving as a salubrious example unto others.

The Election of Israel, in our own terms, means that Israel has chosen God; that Israel's chief preoccupation is to know God, serve Him, and proclaim His word unto the peoples of

the earth. "Israel's election therefore, does not imply presumption, but rather a grave duty and responsibility."

The Jew recognizes himself as chosen not to be a master but a servant to carry the light and the right to the far ends of the earth. "You, Israel, are My servant, I have chosen you . . . My servant whom I uphold, My chosen in whom My soul delights . . . He shall not fail nor be crushed till he have set the right in the earth" (Is. 41:8,9,42-:1,3,4).

"This idea," says Martin Buber, "does not indicate a feeling of superiority, but a sense of destiny. It does not spring from a comparison with others, but from the concentrated devotion to a task, to the task which molded the people into a nation when they attempted to accomplish it in their earlier history. The prophets formulated that task and never ceased uttering their warning: If you boast of being chosen instead of living up to it, if you turn election into a static object instead of obeying it as a command, you will forfeit it!"

The distinction of Israel, however, is a source of perplexity to the author of the Apocalypse! ! Esdras. If Israel is the chosen of God, he asks, why is she permitted to be trodden underfoot by those who deny God?

"O Lord, behold these nations which are reputed as nothing lord it over us and crush us. But we, Thy people whom Thou hast called Thy first born, Thy only-begotten, Thy beloved, are given up into their hands."

This question is asked by some even in our own times. There is an answer: Those chosen, to represent God, or better said, whoever, chooses to live by high ideals, invariably must pay a price. Ideals are hard to live by, they require self sacrifice. The idealist is generally unpopular, misunderstood, detested—until his ideal becomes the way of the populace. Ideals are always demanding, exacting, calling for changes, the modification of ways that are set and hardened. Hence he who promulgates new ways, is rejected, degraded, mortified, and persecuted.

It is ridiculous to compare Israel's idea of election with that of the Aryan race superiority theory; Israel's election is not a boast but a task—a task involving self-improvement. The German race superiority theory is a boast—claiming qualities by virtue of which they (the Aryans) are empowered to dominate all others by force and make their will God's way. The two ideas of chosenness cannot be compared. Israel does not hesitate to acknowledge failure, weakness, and guilt, in performing the task for which it was chosen. The Aryans claim guiltlessness and perfection beyond question.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF PEACE

THE Jew greets his neighbor with the word Shalom—peace. He bids his neighbor or friend good-by with the same word. The word Shalom is much more comprehensive, far more expressive than the English “Hello” or “How are you?” Shalom is really a blessing.

In using the expression Shalom, the greeter voices the hope that his neighbor is perfect in health, enjoying serenity of soul, and that his entire household is in the same state. Shalom means more than peace. It bespeaks wholeness, completeness. The word Shalom is indicative of the Jewish yearning for peace everywhere, and for everyone. “Love peace and pursue it,” is one of Judaism’s basic teachings. It is one of the Jewish eternal values.

Disputes, misunderstandings, which are normal and natural among human beings, are to be settled not by force, according to Judaism. For nothing has ever been settled by force, but by justice. “The world is preserved,” say the rabbis, “by truth, justice and peace.” The prophets fulminated against the use of might by the strong against the weak, against war generally. “Not by might and not by power but by my spirit saith the Lord of hosts.” They envisioned the day when through respect for human dignity, through love and enlightenment, “Nations shall not lift up sword against nation nor shall they learn war anymore.”

Physical strength is not scorned in Judaism. On the contrary, it is glorified when used for the right purpose. "Who is strong ask the sages, he who governs his passions." Not strength for war and destruction, but for self discipline, for control of the wild passions, for peaceful, helpful uses, is Judaism's exhortation on the purpose of physical power.

How Judaism regards the value of peace is illustrated in a variety of ways.

In the introduction to the Zohar, (a book on Jewish mysticism), we read how each letter of the alphabet appeared before the Author of the Torah requesting that it be accorded the privilege of being the opening letter of the Torah. The letter Zayin was refused this privilege because in it are contained "war," the edge of the sword, and the spear of battle.

Another instance of the revolting attitude of Judaism against instruments of war, is manifest in the law of the Torah forbidding iron to be lifted upon the altar; "And if thou make Me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy sword upon it, thou hast profaned it." This law is explained by the rabbis thusly: "The altar is made to prolong the life of man, and iron is used to shorten it; it is not proper that the abbreviator of life be lifted upon its prolonger."

The biblical story of Adam in the Garden of Eden, brings home the Hebraic attitude toward peace even more emphatically. Scripture has it that after Adam was driven from the Garden of Eden, the gates of the garden were sealed with a flashing sword, revolving from east to west, north to south. The Garden, of course, symbolizes the dream of mankind. It represents man's hope of finding peace within his heart and outside of it. The flashing sword is a reminder unto man that he can never attain peace, or never enter the Garden—realize his dream of peace, as long as the sword is before him.

If peace is man's desire, then he must scrap the sword. If

the sword is his fascination, he will not succeed in entering the Garden and his dream of peace will be thwarted.

These legends, laws, and maxims, referring to peace, are the milk which nourished the Jewish soul in its infancy. The ideal of peace was so ingrained in the heart of the Jew that it became a steady prayer on his lips.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF BEAUTY

THE goals and purposes of a people are traceable to its attitude toward life. The Greeks for example, created elegant poetry, artistic literature, and great philosophy. They concentrated mostly on physical, outward, beauty. The cause for their fine achievements in these special areas of human endeavour, was due to their dread of the mutability of being. They could not tolerate a universe in flux, forever changing. Only in the work of art they believed can one discover unchangeableness—the sameness. Through the aid of art they found calmness of spirit.

The Greek took an intellectual view of the world. His attitude toward reality is ideally that of detachment. He is prepared coolly and critically to survey the phenomena of the universe. In his history, his poetry, and his philosophy, he preserves an even balance of sympathy. He contemplates the world from a predominantly aesthetic, rather than from an ethical or religious standpoint.

The Greek is an artist to his fingertips; Aristotle in the poetics lays down the law that, in tragedy, nothing is more important than the arrangement of the incident; it is more important even than the correct delineation of character.

For the Greek, "only the work of art is; only the work of art is true . . . The implication of this attitude is that art is perfect, closed . . . It is beyond all possibility of becoming

otherwise, of developing, it remains what it is. It is consummated. It is perfect, and therefore complete; and as something complete belongs to the past."

The Hebrew attitude toward life was based on the idea of perfectibility, change, becoming. This attitude offers no peace to the soul. On the contrary, it is an attitude from which one experiences tension, expectation, drive, and vision.

"The Hebrew writers," says Professor G. H. Box, "often produce effects of the highest artistic power, but that is because they have a vivid sense of responsibility, a dramatic sense which enables them, at their best to picture a scene from life which is unforgettable. But they are primarily interested in character in its ethical side, and in personality as reflecting character."

This is not to say that the Hebrews did not appreciate physical beauty. "Three things," say the sages, "set a human being's mind at ease, a beautiful home, a beautiful wife, and beautiful clothes." Nevertheless, the Hebrews went a step farther, they sought beauty everlasting beneath the skin.

Here then, are the two separate and distinct attitudes toward life by two different peoples. One is predicated on Aesthetics, the other on Ethics. The Greek finds relief in contemplating perfection. The Hebrew finds satisfaction in the thought of perfectibility. The Greek has his eye, on the moment, the present; the Hebrew looks to the future. For the Greek, beauty is achieved. It is on the canvas. It is carved in the rock. For the Hebrew, beauty is in the making, developing, becoming, yet to reveal itself in its fuller glory. It is embodied in human personality, in character, which is forever growing and developing.

Unlike the Greeks, the Hebrews were attracted to that abiding beauty which time does not mar but which with time increases in loveliness.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF THE MESSIAH

WHEN Job said, "though he slay me yet will I trust in Him," he expressed the dominant characteristic of the Jewish people. The Jews are a people who live by faith. Their eyes are everlastingly trained on the future. They strongly believe in the perfectibility of man; in the brotherhood of man; in a world ruled by divine universal law. They look to the day when ignorance and superstition shall vanish from the face of the earth; when "corruption and evil shall give way to purity and goodness" and when God's Kingdom shall be established on earth.

In moments of trial and tragedy, in days of oppression and persecution, in such times when their very survival appeared hopeless—Jewish faith remained fast, firm, and unmoved. The Jewish optimistic outlook on the world may be epitomized in one word—MASHIAH. MASHIAH is the response of the Jew to a world filled with hate, selfishness, arrogance, disunity, evil and war; man's inhumanity toward his fellow-man.

Why one person or people happens to be optimistic and another pessimistic is not easily determined. Jewish optimism, however, may be attributed to its undying faith in God and in man. From their earliest beginnings, Jews believed in the goodness of God and man, and looked therefore to the unfoldment of this goodness. They refused to accept man's

wickedness and cruelty as the fullest expression of himself. "Thou hast made man a little lower than the angels" said the Psalmist. This exemplifies the Jewish outlook on man. It is this faith, that man can rise higher and higher and become more humane than he is, that motivated Jewish optimism—throughout their history.

Jews believed in the future; in a Messianic period; in the redeeming, saving power, of the Messiah.

"Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end shall greatly increase" (Job 8:7). The Golden Age for the Jew was in the future. Other peoples pictured their best, happiest period in the past. Israel had little pleasantness to look back on. The Patriarchs were forced to wander from country to country because of severe famine in their homeland. And while they were wandering in foreign lands they suffered humiliation, tyranny and harassment. After the period of the Patriarchs, began the Egyptian bondage with all its horrors. Israel's youth was one of affliction. It had no glorious past to revel in. Hence Israel directed its gaze toward a roseate future. It longed for one to ransom it from its miseries and sufferings. It yearned for a Savior, a Redeemer—which at a later time in its history assumed the name of Mashiah.

It is interesting to learn how the term MASIAH came into use; what it originally represented, and, what it finally came to symbolize—for the Jews and also for Christians.

The word MASHIAH originally meant "anointed with oil," in due time, it became a title of honor signifying "chosen" because the act of anointing with oil was the sign of choice and elevation.

In the Holy Scriptures King and high priests are described as the anointed with oil. Saul the first Israelite King is called the "Lord's anointed" (1 Samuel 24:1). Although Saul is designated in the Bible as the "Messiah of God"

(1 Samuel 24:7), he lacked the essential characteristics of the true Messiah. At the very beginning of his reign he was scorned by some, who said, "How shall this man save us?" (1 Samuel 10:27).

For the characteristics of the true Messiah, the people referred to Moses, the one who redeemed them from the House of Bondage. By their image of Moses, they measured their future Redeemer—"Just as Moses brought redemption to his people, so also will Messiah bring redemption, just as Moses was brought up in the house of Pharaoh among the enemies of his people, so also will Messiah dwell in the city of Rome, among the destroyers of his land; just as Moses after revealing himself to his brethren in Egypt and announcing to them that deliverance was near, was forced to go into hiding for a time, so also will Messiah be forced to hide himself after the first revelations; just as Moses crossed from Midian to Egypt riding on an ass (Ex. 4:10), so also will Messiah come riding on an ass; just as Moses caused *manna* to rain from the sky, so will Messiah bring forth different kinds of food in a miraculous way; just as Moses gave to the children of Israel wells and springs of water in the wilderness so will Messiah make streams of water flow in the desert."

Moses lived in the minds of the people of Israel as their first true deliverer. He not only delivered them from their material troubles but also from political servitude. Moses embodied both the spiritual as well as the political characteristics of the Messiah. He was ruler, law giver and leader of the nation. A man such as Moses was to be their Messiah in the days to come.

In David, the second King of Israel, the people saw some of the characteristics of Moses. David, therefore, was regarded by them as the prototype of the Messiah. David's reign was one of many accomplishments. He united the tribes of Israel into a strong nation. By his courage and heroism he

defeated all those peoples to whom Israel had been subject until his time. These things made him a political savior in the eyes of his people. In addition, David possessed great spiritual qualities which qualified him to be regarded as the King Messiah. Besides a hero in battle, was he not also the author of hymns, the sweet singer of Israel?

David left an indelible mark of glory on the pages of Israel's history. The Redeemer of the future had to be like David, of the family of David, to satisfy the needs of the people. That such a leader would appear before them once again, was their hope and dream. Under oppression by foreign rulers, in defeat and rebuff by their surrounding enemies this dream and hope was intensified.

Up to the time of the prophets, the envisioned Redeemer was mostly a strong deliverer of his people from political oppression. But the prophets who sought righteousness and justice, and were not only concerned with the welfare of Israel but the world at large, broadened and deepened the conception of the Savior. Through the moral teachings of the prophets, the Messiah became not only a great political figure but also a man of high moral qualities. Salvation according to the prophets meant redemption from political evil and also spiritual. The dreams of the people of Israel became at the hands of the prophets the dreams of all humanity.

The personality of the Messiah became more and more elevated in the time of the prophets. At first, he was given the attributes of Moses, later, the attributes of King David, still later, the attributes of a prophet were added to him.

The personality of the Messiah developed as the people did. He symbolized their deepest aspirations, their noblest visions, their highest aims.

Their ideal of the true Messiah was never attained. At one time in their national life it was King Hazekiah whom they looked upon as their Savior, at another time they be-

lieved Zerubbabel to be the "anointed one" who was sent to deliver them. Even Cyrus the non-Jew who helped the return of the Jews from Babylonian captivity was looked upon by them as one who was anointed by God to ransom them.

The prophets' conception of the Messiah oscillates between a personal Redeemer and an ideal period; between one who will concern himself with Israel alone, and a time in which mankind will experience "a new heart and new spirit." For example, in chapter 11 Isaiah draws this picture of the future Redeemer:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of its roots. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And he shall inspire him with the fear of the Lord; and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his hips. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Is. 11: 1-9).

Zephaniah on the other hand, conceives a Messianic period which will be a time of spiritual regeneration for the whole world. "Then I will turn to the peoples a pure language that

they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:9).

The prophecy of Zephaniah is more vividly depicted in (Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1:4):

"And it shall come to pass in the end of days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people will go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

The Jewish Messianic concept reveals these aspects of it:

1. The Messiah is depicted as an astute political hero whose purpose is to redeem the Israelites from their enemies, regain for them their national independence, and gather their dispersed from all corners of the earth.
2. The Messiah is both a military as well as a spiritual figure who will come not only to save Israel from its enemies, but elevate and ennoble Israel's spiritual life.
3. The Messiah is one who is to redeem the Israelites and also the world at large.
4. The Messiah represents a period of peace and prosperity to be enjoyed by the Jews alone.
5. The Messiah is a period in which both the Jews and the world will realize peace, brotherhood, and justice, everywhere on earth.

Although the expected Messiah was to be a descendant of King David, yet the Rabbis (of the 2nd century B.C.E.), introduced another Messiah from the tribe of Ephraim; one whom they called Messiah ben Joseph.

What is the meaning of this second Messiah? While many learned opinions have come forth to reconcile the two Messiahs, the most logical explanation is made by Joseph Klausner.

In the earlier periods of the Messianic idea, Klausner states, the Messiah was thought of by the Israelites, as a King and Warrior. Like any ordinary King, the Messiah would lead them in battle and bring them to victory over the foes who afflicted them. This, Klausner claims, was entirely natural throughout the periods of Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Roman control.

In direct contrast to this view, Klausner maintains, was another widespread conception which found support in Isaiah 11 and Zachariah 12. According to this only a spiritual and ethical Messiah was envisioned. Thus this inner contradiction between the political and spiritual Messiah was inherent in the Jewish conception of the Messiah from the earliest times. As long as the political tendency dominated Jewish thought and feeling, says Klausner, this contradiction was readily apparent. That is why Rabbi Akiba could join himself to a purely political Messiah who was distinguished for no spiritual qualities whatever; and could devote himself to Bar Kochba with all the ardor of his soul.

However, only after the fall of Bar Kochba in battle against the Romans; only after political hope of redemption by war and weapons had been dashed by historical events, Klausner points out,—only then was the contradiction described above, felt with full force. Then the spiritual and religio-ethical tendency in the Messianic faith inevitably gained the upper hand. Consequently, this question was raised: "How can sword and bow, which could bring death to

the Messiah, as happened to Bar-Kochba, Rabbi Akiba's Messiah, be the instruments of God's Messiah?"

This idea occurred to them: The twofold character of the Messiah should be transformed into a twofold Messiah. And this was achieved by transferring to a second Messiah the function of waging war in its entirety. Therefore this second Messiah is a warrior-Messiah exclusively, and is more frequently referred to in the later Midrashik literature as "the one anointed for war."

Once a second Messiah became necessary, Klausner holds, he could come from no other tribe than from the tribe of Joseph. The first Messiah was regarded as the son of David, and thus as coming from Judah. What else, then, could the second Messiah be except a son of Joseph or of Ephraim?

As there were varying prophecies pertaining to the personality of the Messiah, that is who he is to be, so there were also copious predictions about the times and circumstances, prior to his appearance. Here are a few prognostications by the Rabbis:

Rabbi Nehorai said: "In the generation when the son of David comes, the young will insult their elders and the elders will wait upon the young" (Sanh. 97a).

Rabbi Jose says, "Great is charity in that it brings the redemption nearer" (B.B. 10a).

Rabbi Jose the Galilean said: "Great is repentance, because it brings near the redemption" (Yoma 86b).

Our Rabbis taught: . . . "The son of David will not come until traitors are many. . . . until disciples are few. . . . until the redemption is despaired of" (Sanh. 97a).

In addition to the conditions described by the Rabbis that would prevail as forewarnings of the Messiah's coming, they added another sign and that is that the Messiah's advent would be preceded by the reappearance of the prophet Elijah.

Elijah was a prophet in Israel in the first half of the ninth

century B.C. In the history of Israel in general, and in the evolution of the religion of Israel in particular, Elijah played a role of utmost significance.

The vivid and impressive description of Elijah in the Bible, stirred the imagination of the poets and he became the center of post-Biblical poetic literature; particularly of the Haggadah and Midrash, and of numberless heroic legends. That is why perhaps he is heralded as the forerunner and the announcer of the Messiah.

But regardless of how the Jewish Messianic concept expressed itself in the different periods of Jewish history, and regardless of the curious predictions that were made in connection with his arrival, one thing is certain, the hope of the Jews to regain their independence, and be freed from their foes, through a Redeemer,—through the Messiah, was kept alive under the most painful circumstances from their earliest beginnings until modern times.

In Judaism, Messianism is synonymous with hope, faith, and belief in a better world tomorrow—through man's enlightenment.

*The Differences Between
The Jewish and Christian Idea
of The Messiah*

The Messiah is one of the basic elements of Judaism. Judaism, without the Messiah idea, would indeed be weakened. For, it is this element from which Judaism draws its strength and by this element it is rendered a religion with a "forward look."

On the other hand, Christianity is inconceivable without the Messiah. The very term Christianity is derived from the Greek translation (Christos) of the Hebrew word "Messiah" (Mashiah).

In Judaism, redemption does not necessarily depend upon

a person, and if it should come through a person, he is not named, except that he will be from Davidic blood.

In Christianity, redemption is dependent upon a person and the person is identified, by the name of Jesus.

The Jewish Messiah is conceived as an individual of human origin, of flesh and blood, as all mortals. The Christian Messiah is clothed in a super human garb and is of anti-natural origin. He is regarded as the son of God, (a Hebrew poetic expression) and also as God.

The task of the Jewish Messiah is to redeem Israel from its enemies and its exile, and also the world from its political and spiritual woes. Through his rule and influence man will turn from his evil ways and will act justly and righteously. "I the LORD will hasten it in its time:" If they are worthy, I will hasten it (the redemption;) if not, it will come in its (own good) time (Sanhedrin 98 A).

The task of the Christian Messiah is to purge man from his inherited sin—the sin of Adam, and fulfills his mission by humiliation and death.

Jewish belief is that—the Messiah is yet to come. According to Christianity he had already come, and because he did not succeed in completing his task the first time, he will come again. Among the Jews the belief prevailed that Elijah would be the forerunner of the Messiah. Christian belief is that John the Baptist was the forerunner of the Messiah. According to the Jewish idea the Messiah is a Messenger of the Lord, he is not to be deified. According to Christianity, He is God the deliverer to be worshipped, for only in him there is the power to save.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF RESURRECTION

WE find in the Traditional Prayer Book, various references to the resurrection of the dead. In the morning Preparatory prayers there is this prayer: "O my God, the soul which Thou gavest me is pure; Thou didst create it, Thou didst form it, Thou didst breathe it into me; Thou preservest it within me, and Thou wilt take it from me but wilt restore it unto me hereafter."

In the concluding part of the Ovos of every Amidah this reference occurs:

"O King who orderest death and restorest life . . . Blessed art Thou who revivest the dead."

In the Pentateuch, there is no hint of the Doctrine of Resurrection. Witness how a Talmudik teacher strains a Scriptural text to show that the Torah is the original source of the idea of Resurrection: Rabbi Meir said: "Whence is the Resurrection derived from the Torah?" As it is said, "Then will Moses and the children of Israel sing, this song unto the Lord (Ex. 15,1) It is not said 'sang' but 'will sing'—; hence the Resurrection is deducible from the Torah" (San. 91.B). I am sure every one will agree that the Rabbi's attempt to prove the mention of Resurrection in the Torah with the aid of his quotation, is trying to draw blood from a stone.

In parts of Job, there is an outright denial of the idea of Resurrection.

"As the cloud fades and vanishes;
so he who goes down to SHEOL does not come up;
he returns no more to his house,
nor does his place know him any more" (7:9).

From Ecclesiastes we have this declaration which shows that the idea of the revival of the dead was far from the Jewish mind in his time: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; every one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all breath so that man hath no preeminence above a beast; for all is vanity" (3-18).

Most of the Psalmists, reflecting the feelings, sentiments, and beliefs of their times, also negate a life after death.

"What profit is there in my blood,
When I go down to the pit?
Shall the dust praise Thee?
Shall it declare Thy truth?" (Ps. 30-10).

In the teachings of the Prophets, the chief concern is this world; the welfare of the nation. "So wrapped up were they in the problems of life and of human happiness here on earth, that they actually discouraged any speculation about the mysteries surrounding the life beyond the grave." If we do find in the lessons of the Prophets a verse here and there pertaining to the rising of the dead, as in Isaiah (26-19), these were not considered as official doctrine but understood rather metaphorically.

Even as late as Ben Sirach (200 B.C.E.) we find a warning quoted with the approval of the Talmud: "Do not inquire into what is beyond thine understanding, and do not investigate what is hidden from thee" (Mishnah Hag. 11-1).

What then is our source for the idea of Resurrection? Is it a Jewish idea, or perhaps a borrowed idea Judaized? At what point in Jewish history did it come into the orbit of

Jewish thought and incorporated in the body of Jewish beliefs?

Before attempting to trace the idea to its official beginning among the Jews, I think it is safe to assert that Resurrection is a psychological concept and is as old as man is. It is one of man's early reactions to death; it is his antidote to it; his unwillingness to accept death as finality.

While it is indubitable that the thought of Resurrection must have occurred to individual Jews as it did to other peoples, and as it was natural that it should have, officially, however, it was denounced and repulsed by the Jewish teachers during the time of the first Hebrew Commonwealth.

It seems, then, that Resurrection is not an idea which emanated from, and was promulgated by Judaism, but one that was rather brought into Judaism from the outside.

In our times when the underprivileged battles for rights due him as a person, he employs political instruments with which to gain his end. The means used in ancient times were from the arsenal of religion, and the Resurrection Doctrine was one of these means. In brief, Resurrection, was a rebellion of the poor, and disadvantaged.

It was a cry for recognition, for rights, for equality, for democracy. The common people then, as today, wanted the promise of a better deal, a happier lot.

In view of the strong belief in God's justice, the plebians believed that their reward, their share of the good things life has to offer, would come in the next world. Without this promise they had nothing to live for. Hence, the idea of Resurrection, which guaranteed them a brighter future—a day of reckoning, a day of justice and equity.

Resurrection as it presented itself to the Jews from the outside only spoke of the rising of the dead. It made no other promises. To rise and suffer again was not attractive enough in itself. It had to offer a little more. Consequently, to this doctrine, they added the idea of Salvation. "Only

when the doctrine was presented as one of salvation, for the righteous, be they rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, noble or plebian, did the masses of Jerusalem become converted to it." Thus, a foreign idea believed to be imported from Babylonia was Judaized and became more or less official by dint of popular wish and need.

Beginning with the fourth century B.C.E., the doctrine of Resurrection, despite opposition to it, steadily gained ground.

Its full acceptance, and general popularity, spread during the Hasmonean struggle against Antiochus Eppiphanes.

The writer of the Book of Daniel asserted it proudly and assured the dying martyrs that they would be called back to life eternal, while their oppressors also would be revived, but for everlasting derision and contempt.

Filled with the conviction of individual Resurrection and regarding this world as nothing more than a prelude to a greater and finer life, they faced their executioners calmly and perhaps even cheerfully.

"Certainly it is both comforting and convenient," says Kaufman Kohler "to imagine the dead who are laid to rest in the earth as being asleep and to await their reawakening. As the fructifying rain awakens to a new life the seeds within the soil, so that they rise from the depths arrayed in new raiment, so, when touched by the heavenly dew of life, will those who linger in the grave arise to a new existence, clad in new bodies. This is the belief which inspired the pious founders of the synagogal liturgy even before the period of the Maccabees, when they expressed their praise of God's power in that He would send the fertilizing rain upon the vegetation of the earth, and likewise in due time the revivifying dew upon the sleeping world of man. Both appeared to the sages of that age to be evidences of the same wonder-working power of God. Whoever, therefore, still sees God's greatness, as they did, revealed through miracles, that is,

through interruptions of the natural order of life, may cling to the traditional belief in resurrection, so comforting in ancient times. On the other hand, he who recognizes the unchangeable will of an all wise, all ruling God in the immutable laws of nature must find it impossible to praise God according to the traditional formula as the 'Reviver of the dead,' but will avail himself instead of the expression used in the Union Prayer Book after the pattern of Einhorn, 'He who has implanted within us immortal life.' "

The belief in Resurrection, in modern times has been spiritualized and substituted by the idea of the immortality of soul.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF PHARISAISM AND THE PHARISEES

THE Torah and the Jewish people are one. One without the other is inconceivable—even as Christendom is inconceivable without Christ. The Jews are a distinct people by virtue of the Torah and it is the Torah that is mainly responsible for the survival of the Jewish people. But the Torah is an ancient document, containing on the whole, laws, lessons, and precepts, intended for a very early period of Jewish history. By what power, what magic then, did this instrument of antiquity manage to remain the guiding influence of the Jew through the ages and to this day? In other words, if the Torah is credited with preserving the Jew, what has preserved the Torah? The logical answer to this question is of course—the Jewish people. By clinging to the Torah the Jewish people have therefore preserved it. But why would a people honor teachings that had no appeal for them, which were not related to their lives? It is unlikely that sheer sentimentality could have preserved the Torah. The answer seems to lie elsewhere.

To know how the Torah was preserved and why its influence over the Jews never ceased, requires some knowledge of the Pharisaic period—an understanding of the work of the Pharisees. For it was during that period, and through the genius and spirit of the Pharisees that the Torah was rescued for the future.

Now who were the Pharisees and what did they do with

the Torah that the Jews throughout their long history could make its teachings their way of life, be inspired by its commandments, and utter the words: "For they are our life and the length of our days. Day and night we will meditate upon them."?

Pharisaism is traceable to the period of the Babylonian exile and even to the time of Moses. Pharisaism is an attempt to make religion the dominant factor in the daily life of a human being and in society as a whole. It represents spiritual growth; it symbolizes ethical and moral progress; it defines Judaism; it is the key to the Jewish soul.

By virtue of Pharisaism, Judaism was never allowed to lag behind the times, become a relic, a dead letter.

The Pharisaic spirit is evident in the ethical and moral laws of Moses; it is manifested in the democratic, universal teachings of the prophets; it is reflected in liberal rabbinic lore, and the wisdom of the Jewish philosophers.

Pharisaism is at work in every period of Jewish history, in every phase of Jewish thought and life; its paramount concern is to pursue truth and promote the spiritual welfare of man. Every attempt ever made to thwart the progressive dynamic spirit of Pharisaism from within or without was destined to fail.

The name Pharisee, which has come into the English language through the Latin translation of the New Testament and represents the Greek word *Pharisaeus*, goes back directly to the Aramaic word *Parisha*, the equivalent, in popular speech, of the Hebrew *Parush*, from the verb *parash*. The root meaning of the verb is "to separate." The name Pharisee would seem to indicate persons who were separated.

What the Pharisees separated themselves from, still remains conjectural. However, in view of the Pharisaic nature, it would be a good guess to say that the Pharisees separated themselves from such religious beliefs, principles, and opinions, which were outdated, static and reactionary.

The position of Pharisaism is best exemplified by its battle against the priesthood after the Jews returned from Babylonian captivity in 537 B.C. This period may be considered as the beginning of the end of priestly dominion. With this period a new type of leader emerged; one who was more representative of the people, than the priest.

"The priests were a hereditary class; their number was bound to include a good many whose only right to the priesthood was that of birth, but who had no qualifications for its tasks. Meantime, knowledge of the Torah spread among men who were not of priestly descent. Soon these pious and learned laymen came to be regarded as authorities in their own right. Their prestige grew as that of the priesthood sank."

The new leader that arose is called Sofer—"Scribe." The period itself is described as that of the Sopherim-Scribes. Ezra who helped the Jews readjust themselves after their return from Babylonia is perhaps the first of the Soferim. By the description given of him, the character of the Soferim is included. It is said of Ezra (Ezra VII-10) that "he had set his heart to 'seek' the law of the Lord and to do it and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." "The word 'seek' does not represent what Ezra had set his heart to do. 'Darash' in this connection when its object is the Torah, is not to 'seek' but to 'interpret.'" Ezra was the first of these who made it their business to interpret the Torah; and he did so for the purpose of "teaching in Israel statutes and judgments."

The Soferim, were first and foremost, "Men of the Book," and that Book was the Sepher Torah, which it was their duty to expound and teach.

Learned in the Law, the Soferim or Scribes, who were called the Pharisees (Separated), were intent on wresting the Torah from the hand of the priest, popularize it and make it the guiding law of the masses.

The priests who were the official heads of the community

and whose first function was to minister in the Sanctuary, placed Abodah—the Sacrificial rites in the Temple, before the study of the Torah. In this policy they were supported by the aristocracy, who took no interest in the dissemination of religious knowledge. The priests and their followers were called the Sadducees—“followers or descendants of Zadok,” a priest who lived during the days of Solomon.

As the Soferim, or the Pharisees, were determined to spread the knowledge of the Torah among the people, so they also advocated the democratization of worship through public prayer; a higher form of worship and a more direct approach to God. “The Pharisees,” says Leo Baeck, “with clear and imperative decisiveness, introduced over and above the Temple service exclusively performed by the priests, a mode of divine service that the whole people could perform independently in its synagogue by means of prayer and study of the Bible. In this sense they can be called the people’s party, which fought against the privileged position and hereditary prerogatives of the priests.”

The disputes between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, the Soferim and the priests, continued for a long time. The real impact, however, of the people’s party did not make itself felt until the second century B.C.

Now, what were the main points of disagreement between the Pharisees and the Sadducees? The Sadducees claimed full authority in all matters pertaining to religion. They claimed that they had this authority from the Torah itself. They argued that they were the only legitimate custodians of the Torah. They held that the Temple was the only national institution of worship and that they were the recognized functionaries of the Temple. It was their belief that only the written law in its literal form was binding upon the people and all such laws which they themselves decreed.

The Pharisees who through the centuries popularized the

Torah and raised many scholars, held other views. They maintained that the Law was the heritage of the entire house of Jacob, the common possession of all the people, and that the priests had no monopoly in it. Since there was no authority other than the Law, therefore all who knew the Law, that are its teachers, whether priests or Israelites could speak in its name and represent its authority. They further stressed that in addition to the Written Law—there was an Oral Law—Tradition, and that it was equal to the Written Law. They included in the Torah, the teachings of the Prophets and the other sacred writings. "God" they said, "desired to ennoble and benefit Israel, therefore He multiplied for them Torah and Commandments"; that is, He gave them more than just the written Torah. "The Pharisees, on the basis of tradition," Josephus reports, "teach the people many precepts that are not recorded in the Law of Moses. For that very reason the party of the Sadducees rejects them, declaring that it is commanded that the written precepts be observed, but that the precepts taught on the basis of the teachings of the fathers be not observed." They argued that the Torah is the guide of the people and needs to be kept up to date through interpretation. They held that the word Torah means more than Law; that it means study, and also interpretation. They also impressed upon the minds of the people the lesson that sacrifices were not the most acceptable form of worship and that worship through prayer was a more effective, more progressive approach to God, than animal sacrifices and the burning of incense.

It was the Pharisaic spirit which rendered the Torah into a living law—a law of life. The broad liberal Pharisaic concept of Torah, God, religion, and humanity, assured the future of the Torah and the people of the Torah.

The Pharisees were the strongest guardians of the religious vitality of the Jewish people. They had the deepest and

clearest insight into the meaning of the religion which was based on the Torah, and they had the greatest influence in making that religion effective in the common life.

The primary concern of the Pharisees was to make the Torah the supreme guide of life, in thought, word and deed, by study of its contents, obedience to its precepts, and, as the root of all, conscious service of God Who had given the Torah. This was their ideal for themselves, and for all whom they could influence.

In the synagogue they had developed a type of religion which was independent of the Temple and unharmed by its destruction. And in the schools, more particularly those where the leading teachers (rabbis) studied and taught the Torah, they insured the continuity of the Jewish religion, both as theory and practice, in spite of all outward disasters. The Jewish religion as it is today traces its descent, without a break, through all the centuries, from the Pharisees.

"Pharisaism," says Dr. Jacob Lauterbach, "has contributed much to religious development and to religious liberalism. For, directly and indirectly, within Judaism and outside of it, it has helped much to bring about a finer appreciation of religious ideas, a higher spiritual conception of God, a better understanding of men as the children of God, and of their relation to one another. It has taught man to recognize God as his father and his fellowman as his brother.

"In particular, it has enabled Judaism to develop as a spiritual religion without a sacrificial cult, without an hereditary priesthood, and not limited to any one place, but expressing eternal spiritual truths and spreading the ideas of One God and one humanity throughout the world."

Pharisaism and the New Testament

To the Gospel writers is due the misconception that still commonly prevails with reference to the Pharisees, who are

depicted as a body of hypocrites, who strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. They are represented as a body of men who made a parade of the outward forms of their religion, and neglected the spiritual teachings that make for a pure and healthy life.

The general condemnation of a body of earnest, pious men, for the sins of a few, is neither a true picture of Pharisaism or a just estimate of the inner work of its adherents.

The Pharisees aimed at observing the law in all its details. They were composed of those God-fearing sons of Israel who regarded the highest service to be the service of God. Ceremonial observance, the Pharisees believed was the only way of ensuring a continual relationship with God. If Judaism was to dominate life, they felt, it must sanctify life at every hour and with every action.

It is often said that the Pharisees minimized spirituality—because of their emphasis of ceremonial observances. While it is true that they stressed the outward observances, it is not true that they frowned upon spirituality.

It was their conviction that the body is the complement of the spirit, no less than the spirit is of the body. Heart religion according to Pharisaism is not enough. Religion requires certain outward manifestations to express its spiritual cravings.

It would be untrue to nature to maintain that all Pharisees were perfect. There may have been, and there probably were, some who, in their zeal to appear God fearing outwardly, were really sinners in secret. What must be remembered is, that ceremonial practice is not incompatible with spiritual purity—it is designed as a necessary prelude to it. A hypocritical Pharisee, here and there, is not sufficient to malign a body of pious men. The point that matters is that the essence of Pharisaeic doctrine and belief was Godliness.

How can we explain the misconception of the Pharisees and Pharisaism by the Gospel writers? After all some of the

writers of the Gospel were Jews themselves, and a goodly number of the members of the early Church were also Jews and to whom Pharisaism should not have been strange? Was the misconception due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of the Pharisaic spirit or shall we say that the misconception was deliberate in order to justify the "New Religion" which broke away from the law and based its belief only on spirituality or inwardness?

It seems to me that Travers Herford, offers a logical answer to the question, "The New Testament as a whole," he says, "is the product of a religious movement which, EX HYPOTHESI, was not Jewish, and its general attitude towards Judaism, apart from individual Jews, is nowhere friendly, and often hostile. The Christian Movement which produced the New Testament, and the Church which adopted it, stood in a relation to the Judaism from which it had come forth, which was that of opposition towards a rival, a discredited rival who could be a dangerous enemy. There was certainly never any question of mutual friendship between Christianity and Judaism in or since the century which saw the rise of the former. Therefore the evidence of the New Testament upon the subject of Pharisaism is at best only the evidence of outsiders who could see its effects but had not the means of knowing from within what produced those effects; and who, for want of that knowledge, were not in a position to judge rightly what they did see. It is, moreover, the evidence of partisan witnesses, honestly partisan no doubt, intensely convinced that they were in the right, but none the less partisan, even when not definitely hostile. This is not to say that they were on that account false witnesses; it is to say that their evidence is only of secondary value for deciding the question of the real meaning of Pharisaism, and cannot be admitted till that of the Pharisees themselves has been heard.

THE JEWISH CONCEPT OF JESUS

MUCH that is good and beautiful has been taught and preached in the name of Jesus since the rise of Christianity some 2,000 years ago. At the same time, much wickedness and cruelty has been perpetrated in Jesus' name during the same period. How can this paradox be explained?

The good that is preached in the name of Jesus, is the very foundation of Christianity. For basically and primarily Christianity is a religion of love. On the other hand, the evil that has come from the hand of Christendom and from which Jew and Judaism suffered greatly is due first, to the difficulty of fulfilling the command of practicing love always and under all circumstances, and secondly, to the profound misunderstanding of Jesus' relationship to the Jews and the Jewish religion.

Only in our century have attempts been made by Christian and Jewish scholars to carefully review and analyze all the available sources pertaining to Jesus and present a fair account of him, his times, and his teachings.

These scholarly contributions may be considered as a boon to both Christian and Jew. For both need to be enlightened; both are badly in need of a fuller appreciation of the greatest and most fascinating figure of the human race.

Now, who was Jesus? If he was a Jew, what did he say or do that was objectionable to his people? If he was not a

Jew, where did he come from and why did he happen to seek out above all others the Jews for his preachment or conversion to his beliefs?

Contrary to some opinions by men of the 19th century, who were not particularly friendly toward the Jews, it is generally agreed that Jesus was a Jew. And, not only was he born a Jew, but from the beginning to the end of his life he was a loyal, faithful, son of his people, dedicated to his religion.

Jesus the Jew

"Jesus," says Julius Wellhausen, "was not a Christian: he was a Jew. He did not preach a new faith but taught men to do the will of God; and in his opinion, as also in that of the Jews, the will of God was to be found in the Law of Moses and in the other books of Scripture."

When Jesus was asked by one of the Scribes what he considered as the first of all commandments, Jesus replied: "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul . . . this is the first commandment, and the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self. There is no commandment greater than these." And, when one asked him how he could inherit eternal life, Jesus answered: "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not defraud, and, Honour thy father and thy mother."

Jesus' attitude toward Judaism is made unmistakably clear by one of his sayings in his "Sermon on the Mount." "Think not that I came to destroy the Law or the prophets: I came not to destroy but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle, shall in no wise pass away from the law till all things be accomplished—

whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of heaven."

It was only the Shammaitic strictness in the observance of the Sabbath which forbade even the healing of the sick on that day that Jesus protested against, declaring that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath. Even Fasting found no opponent in him, so far as it was practiced without ostentation. He wore on his garments the fringes ordered by the Law, and he belonged thoroughly to Judaism.

At no time during his short life, did Jesus dream of forsaking his people, or the God of his Fathers, and start a new religion. Whatever Jesus preached, whatever he believed and taught, was strictly out of his milieu, out of his Jewish background, out of the Jewish sources that were familiar to him.

If what Jesus said or did in his time among his people, appear strange to the Jew of our day, it is only because we are removed from the thoughts and life of his period by twenty centuries. We read his life, we judge his acts and his views, by our own present day knowledge and understanding of religion generally, and Judaism in particular. The misjudgment we oft-times impute to Jesus is completely that of our own.

Too often, the unpleasant acts of Christendom have been mistaken by Jews as a tribute to Jesus; as devotion to the principles by which he himself lived and which he personally promulgated. In other words, Jesus is judged not by what he represents, but by the acts of Christendom.

Christians on the other hand, who are totally ignorant of Jewish doctrine, Jewish ethics, Jewish concepts of God, man, and the world, cannot fathom why Jews should have rejected the noble and ennobling teachings of Jesus. It seems to them that only a base people would have done so.

Few Christians realize, however, that there was hardly anything for the Jews to accept of the teachings of Jesus with which they had not already been familiar, which had not already been part and parcel of their daily and religious life.

Jesus, after all, knew no other sources from which to preach and teach but that of his people. If he spoke of Judgment Day, Reward and Punishment, the Messiah, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the like, all these were Jewish concepts. Perhaps these ideas were fresh, novel, inspiring and exciting for the Greek world, which later, through Paul, incorporated them into its religious and cultural life, but for the Jews, these concepts were as common as the rising and the setting of the sun. These ideas and others referred to by Jesus, were current among the Jews at least two centuries before him. Hence the notion on the part of Christians that the Jews rejected Jesus' teachings is completely erroneous.

The fact remains nevertheless, that Jesus the Jew, the devout Jew, was eventually crucified. Why was he crucified and by whom? Although crucifixion was the Roman and not the Jewish way of ultimate punishment, it is undeniable that some Jews had a hand in influencing Rome to give Jesus the ultimate sentence. Why?

Jesus cannot be properly understood without first transplanting ourselves into his day and his environment.

Jesus lived in a time of political oppression, economic disturbance, social change and religious revolution. His country was ruled by the mighty hand of Rome, there was great unrest among the people, they yearned for their independence as any subjugated people would. There was much poverty and unemployment rampant throughout the land. The nation was divided into many different sects. The jealousy between the aristocracy and the plebians was sharp and strong; the religious disagreement and disputes between the Scribes the Pharisees (common people), and the Saducees (priests), were many and various. On every front, the signs

of sorrow, sadness, and discontent, were writ in large letters. The Jewish people impatiently waited for a Redeemer; for the Messiah, promised to them by their prophets.

"The enthusiasm," says Ernest Renan, "with which Jesus committed Himself to His belief in His own divine powers is difficult for our cold and scrupulous natures to understand. We will comprehend it to better advantage if we remember that He lived in a world whose natural functions were so little understood that belief in the supernatural was a necessity, natural and common. Whatever may be the faults of this outlook, it makes possible the overleaping of the petty barriers to progress with which the rational mind is prone to surround itself.

The miracles of Jesus proceeded out of this milieu. Since no natural laws were known, many cause and effect relationships could be explained only upon a supernatural basis. Furthermore, miracles and the fulfillment of prophecies were historically necessary to establish the validity of the Messiah. In the minds of Jesus and His contemporaries, therefore, miracles were both possible and necessary, so it is not surprising that they occurred."

Birth and Background of Jesus

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, and sometime after his birth, his family moved to Nazareth in Galilee. The date of his birth is uncertain. Matthew places it sometime before the death of Herod the Great (4 B.C.E.) Luke connects it with the Roman census of Judea (6 C.E.) The parents of Jesus were Joseph, a carpenter and Mary, or Miriam. (According to the accounts in Gospels he was born of Mary without a human father). Joseph and Mary had besides Jesus, four sons: Jacob, José, Judah and Simon, and several daughters. Jesus grew up with them in Nazareth and like his father, became a carpenter. While he had received no formal edu-

cation, he was nevertheless, acquainted with the Bible, with the religious customs of the Jews of Galilee and the sayings of the Jewish sages.

Galilee, at a distance from the capitol of the Temple, was far behind Judea in mental attainments and knowledge of the law. But, on the other hand, morality was stricter in Galilee and the observance of laws and customs more rigidly enforced. Through their proximity to the Syrians, the Galileans had adopted many superstitions and their Hebrew language was also corrupted by their Syrian neighbors by the introduction of Aramaic expressions.

On account of his Galilean origin where the educational facilities were limited, Jesus was deprived of the mastery of the Law. His deficiency in this knowledge, was compensated, however, by his religious fervor, moral purity, gentle disposition and the enviable virtue of humility. His whole being was permeated with tenderness, sympathy and brotherly love.

It might be said of Jesus that he was more absorbed in things of the spirit than in things material. There was within him a deep yearning for God, the heavenly—the celestial. Owing to his temperament, his character, and special interests, he was destined for something greater than carpentry. What he needed was the incident that would cause him to abandon his craft and go to those higher things which his soul was more akin to, what his heart demanded of him.

Before long the incident came, the occasion arose, the opportunity presented itself to him, through the Essene, John the Baptist.

The Incident Which Helped Jesus to Choose the Ministry

In addition to the Sadducean and Pharisaic parties that were extant in Judea in Jesus' time, there was another group known as the Essenes. The name "Essenes," according to the

most widely accepted opinion is derived from the Hebrew HASIDIM, "the Pietists." The Essenes were highly individualistic in their attitudes toward Jewish life. Before every meal they bathed their bodies in cold water, and before partaking of food a priest said grace. They were strict in the observance of the Bible. They formed communities of their own and in these communities they found it possible to live in accordance with their own customs.

Josephus says that the Essenes displayed extraordinary interest in the writings of the ancients, "singling out in particular those which make for the welfare of soul and body. With the help of these and with a view to the treatment of diseases, they made investigations into medicinal cures." The Essenes did not participate in the social, economic, and political life of their people. Some of them rejected the institution of marriage. They would adopt the children of other parents to insure the continuation of their life. Their rule of life was love. For them love of God, of virtue, and of their fellowman, was the motto by which they lived.

It was the sect of Essenes that pictured the Messiah and the Messianic times in the most idealistic manner. It was from the Essenes that for the first time the cry went forth, "The Messiah is coming! The Kingdom of heaven is near!" The Essene who sent forth this call to the Israelites was John the Baptist (his name doubtless meaning the Essene, he who daily bathed and cleansed his body and soul in spring water). John entertained the belief, that if the whole Judean nation would bathe in the river Jordan, acknowledge their sins and adopt the stringent rules of the Essenes, then the promised Messianic time would be hastened.

In view of the belief that prevailed among the Jews, that before the Messiah would make his appearance, he would be preceded by the Prophet Elijah, there were many therefore because of the Baptist's asceticism and call for repentance, who considered him as the Prophet Elijah.

When John the Baptist, invited all to come and receive baptism in the Jordan, to repent and prepare for the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus hastened to obey the call and was baptized by him.

The Baptist drew to himself such throngs that Herod Antipas, governor of the province in which the Baptist dwelt, ordered his arrest. He was suspicious of a man who could attract unto himself such large crowds and move their hearts. The Baptist was imprisoned and later beheaded.

It is at this point, that Jesus felt called upon by destiny to carry on the work of his Master, the Baptist.

In order to avoid the fate of John the Baptist, Jesus did not wait for large crowds to gather around him at any of his meetings nor did he tarry too long in any one particular town or village.

To assist him in spreading his message, he appointed twelve Apostles from his closest admirers whom he commissioned to go in twos and preach in the surrounding villages. These Apostles revered their Master so much that before long they regarded him as the promised Messiah.

Even though Jesus had not announced himself as the Messiah, the thought however, that he was the Redeemer of his people must have occurred to him on several occasions. Once he turned to his disciples with this question: "What do men say of me? Who do men say that I am?" the disciples replied: "John the Baptist. Some say, Elijah; and others, One of the prophets." Jesus asked again: "But ye yourselves who do you say that I am?" Whereupon one of his disciples (Simon the fisherman) stepped forward and said, "Thou art the Messiah."

Unlike the Baptist, Jesus did not address himself to the nation as a whole. He believed that he could accomplish more by engaging the interest of a particular class of Judeans. He sought out therefore, the poor, the ignorant, the hated publicans (tax collectors for Rome), and those that for one reason

or another had been expelled from their Jewish community. He felt within himself the call to save "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." As it is attributed to him saying, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"—(Matthew 9:12).

By word and example Jesus raised the sinner and the publican, and filled the hearts of those poor, neglected, thoughtless beings with the love of God, transforming them into dutiful children of their heavenly Father. He animated them with his own piety and fervor, and improved their conduct by the hope he gave them of being able to enter the kingdom of heaven. That was the greatest miracle that Jesus performed. Above all things, he taught his male and female disciples the Essene virtues of self-abnegation and humility, of the contempt of riches, of charity and the love of peace. He said to his followers, "Provide neither gold nor silver nor brass for your purses, neither two coats, neither shoes" (Matthew X. 9). He bade them become sinless as little children, and declared they must be as if born again if they would become members of the approaching kingdom of heaven. The law of brotherly love and forbearance he carried to the extent of self-immolation. "If you receive a blow on one cheek, turn the other one likewise, and if one takes your cloak, give him likewise your shirt." He taught the poor that they should not take heed for meat or drink or raiment, but pointed to the birds in the air and the lilies in the fields that were fed and clothed yet "they toil not, neither do they spin." He taught the rich how to distribute alms—"Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." He admonished the hypocrite, and bade him pray in the secrecy of his closet.

Jesus' Style of Teaching

The teaching of Jesus, said George Santayana was, "pure Hebraism reduced to its spiritual essence." His manner and

his method of teaching, however, were purely his own. His style remains to this day unmatched in the annals of pedagogy. He resorted to the parable to clarify his points, and the parables he employed are so vivid, so pointed, and so picturesque, that even the simplest of his followers could not fail to grasp their meaning. "His parables," says Joseph Klausner, "are attractive, short, popular, drawn from every day life full of instruction, simple and profound at the same time in form and profound in substance. . . . Besides the parables there are the striking proverbs of Jesus. They are sharp and shrewd, hitting their mark like pointed darts, and, in the manner of homely epigrams and proverbs impossible to be forgotten."

The Character of Jesus

The parables, proverbs, and popular sayings, which Jesus used in his preaching were yet not enough to capture hearts, to stir minds, to win followers. The preacher needs to have a special type of personality; this renders his preachment more authentic and more memorable. Jesus possessed that unusual personality. It is said of him that "he had the heart of a woman and the mind of a man." He was gentle, kind, and humble. But when the occasion demanded it, he showed the passion akin to that of the Prophet. On the one hand, he gave the impression that he was a visionary and dreamer, completely out of touch with this world, on the other hand, when he spoke to the ignorant, he employed practical examples to reach even the simplest of boors.

One aspect of his personality reveals him as a man of the people, one of the villagers, and almost illiterate. Another aspect of his make-up is that of the master preacher, versed in Scripture, saturated with the great ideas of the prophets

and the Psalms, possessed with a strong belief in his mission and in himself.

So strong was Jesus' belief in himself that he came to rely upon himself more than upon any of Israel's great ones, even Moses: this characteristic is summed up in the formula: "It was said to you by them of old time . . . but I, Jesus, say unto you . . ." We must remember that nothing is more conducive to conviction in others than a man's belief in his own self: once a man believes absolutely in himself, others, too come to believe in him almost as they would in God, and though exaggerated self-confidence can at times be repellent, yet Jesus was often tender, gentle and humble as to mask his intense self-confidence.

This happy combination, of uniqueness of personality and style of teaching made it possible for Jesus to attract unto himself a following of men as well as women. "The people flocked after Jesus whose parables were so attractive. They were simple folk, fishermen, labourers, tax-gathers, many unemployed."

Jesus, was notable in another matter: he healed many that were sick. The people looked upon the Pharisees and Scribes as holy men and therefore miracle-workers. But with the Pharisees miracles were only a secondary interest. With Jesus, however, miracles were a primary factor since, without them, he could not have attracted so many of the simple folk of Galilee.

While Jesus taught the essence of Judaism to his followers, his interpretation of Scripture nevertheless, was not always the accepted or conventional one. But, his deviation from what was traditionally accepted, was also Judaism. Judaism was never static—and its laws never dependent on one particular interpretation. As it is said, "Shivim Ponin la Torah" (There are seventy facets to the Torah). Then again, it must be borne in mind, that in the time of Jesus, the Law was not

fully settled on many matters, and the Scribes themselves or the Pharisees who disagreed with Jesus were constantly introducing new interpretations of the law with the aim of bringing it up to date and in consonance with life.

Jesus was an individualist. As demonstrated by his many wonderful parables, he was also original. Being both individualistic and original in his thinking, he was therefore a non-conformist. His interpretation of the Law was motivated by his individualism and also by the spirit of his period as said above, which was one of change due to the shifting of power from the priest to the Scribe. Jesus was not completely detached from his environment as some imagine him to have been. No person can avoid the stamp and influence of his surroundings.

Like the prophets before him, he had little use for religious ritual and ceremony especially when it was exercised without any effect on the religionist. And, like the prophets of old, he stressed good deeds. But with one main difference; the prophets sought through their teachings to improve man and society for the sake of occasioning God's Kingdom here on earth. Jesus on the other hand, tended toward improving man, in order to establish God's Kingdom of heaven. The former were this worldly. The latter, had other worldly interests.

Friedrich Nietzsche speaks of Jesus's remoteness from daily life and the facts of existence thusly: "Culture is unknown to Jesus even by hearsay; he feels no need for opposing it—he does not dispute it; that is to say, he does not even adopt a negative attitude towards it since for him it does not exist at all.

"So, too, with what concerns the State, civil order and the society, labour and war; he never had any grounds for denying the world, for he never even realized the existence of the 'world' in its ecclesiastical connotation. Jesus concentrated on the future life. He taught about the world to come about life in heaven."

The Pharisees, in the time of Jesus, were the embodiment of Jesus and the prophets. They incorporated in their program of life the doctrines of both. The Pharisees, against the will of the Sadducees, introduced the concept of Resurrection and declared it official Judaism; they also included in their teachings the ideas of Judgment Day, Immortality of the soul, Reward and Punishment, and similar other mystical concepts. However, the stress in Pharisaic teaching, on the whole, was not on the mystical and things other worldly in nature. Pharisaic thought included both, things of this world as well as that which were of the world to come.

In the teachings of Jesus, the emphasis was primarily on the spiritual, on the heavenly, on the mysterious and mystical. When he calls for good deeds, or the pure clean life, it is not with the view to make life necessarily enjoyable on earth, but rather to prepare man for God's Kingdom of heaven and to hasten the day of the Kingdom of the Almighty. Yet one other point of difference between Jesus and the Pharisees needs to be mentioned, while Jesus appealed to the individual, the Pharisees spoke to the nation as a whole. It is this line of teaching, this approach to Judaism, and this negation of things material in the here and now, that had brought Jesus into conflict with the teachers, the legislators, the legal interpreters and leaders of his day.

The Ethics Jesus Taught

A few examples of the teachings of Jesus will give us a glimpse of its character. These teachings are to be found chiefly in Matthew and are mainly grouped together in what is called "The Sermon on the Mount."

"If thy right eye" or "thy right hand offend thee," "pull out thine eye" and "cut off thine hand: it is better that one of thy members perish than that thy whole body go down to Gehenna." It is forbidden to swear any oath, even on the

truth. It is forbidden to fight against evil, and "whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any . . . would take away thy coat let him have thy cloak also . . . Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." "Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you . . . for if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5:29-30).

Almsgiving should be in secret so that the left hand may not know what the right hand is doing: "When thou doest alms sound not a trumpet before thee . . . in the synagogues and in the streets." Display in prayer is likewise forbidden, or "much speaking as do the Gentiles;" but prayer should be brief, in secret, behind closed doors (Matt. 6:3-8).

He who looks on a woman and lusts after her, commits adultery in his heart. He who divorces his wife (and marries another) commits adultery, and a divorced woman who is married to another also commits adultery; for "whom God hath joined together let not man put asunder." Better is it not to marry at all (Matt. 19:3-10).

No man can serve two masters, God and Mammon (the world). So let him take no thought for the morrow: "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin, . . . yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these; but if God doth so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you." Let not a man look on the mote that is in his brother's eye and ignore the beam that is in his own eye. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets." To enter into the kingdom

of heaven it is not enough to call Jesus, "Lord, lord!" Rather let a man do the will of his heavenly Father.

He that loves father, mother or son or daughter more than Jesus, is not worthy of him, "for he that findeth his soul shall lose it, and he that loseth his soul for Jesus's sake shall find it. "Everyone that doeth the will of my heavenly Father, he is my brother and sister and mother." "Be ye hated of all men for my name's sake." "Fear not them that can kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," for "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul?" "Man is lord of the Sabbath" and "it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" and therefore it is permitted to pluck ears of corn on the Sabbath and, on the Sabbath, to heal even in cases where life is not endangered (Matt. 10:37-39).

"If thy brother sin against thee" reprove him, and if he hearken unto thee well; if he hearken not, warn him in the presence of two or three witnesses, "and if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church (ekklesia), and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican" (Matt. 18:15-17).

While Jesus and the Pharisees differed sharply on several points of law, this alone did not create the gulf between them. Disagreement on Jewish law, among the teachers was not uncommon in the Jewish community. Judaism encourages study, searching, and interpretation. The very word Torah means all that.

"Freedom of speech" says the historian H. Graetz, "had, owing to the frequent debates in the schools of Shammai and Hillel, become so firmly established a right that no one could be attacked for expressing religious opinions."

There had to be much greater cause for the Pharisees to find fault with Jesus than his free liberal, poetic, mystical interpretation and teaching of Judaism. What was it?

Jesus' emphasis of the Kingdom of heaven and his nega-

tion of this world, was viewed as a threat to the State and national Judaism. It meant the ruin of national life. "Where there is no call for the enactment of laws, for justice, for national statecraft," says Joseph Klausner, "where belief in God and the practice of an extreme and one-sided ethic is in itself enough—there we have the negation of national life."

The majority, who followed the Pharisees and Scribes could on no account accept Jesus' nullification of this world. For Judaism, is a way of life. It is a religion of life; calling for the enjoyment and sanctification of every deed, every act of life with the aim of creating a happier condition here on earth among the children of men.

The Gulf Between Jesus and the Pharisees

That which estranged Jesus from the Pharisees was due, in my opinion, to three main causes. First, it was that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah. Since the Jews expected that the Messiah they awaited would bring them redemption from their oppressive conditions and Jesus did not, they disregarded him as the true Redeemer. Secondly, the Pharisees were afraid that the nation would suffer at the hands of Rome because he was proclaimed as the Messiah. For, Rome looked upon any popular leader of the people with disfavor and great suspicion. And thirdly, Jesus' complete disregard for this world and strong emphasis in his teaching on the world in the hereafter. This rendered his teaching—not particularly anti-Jewish but in a way un-Jewish.

The Pharisees, who were members of the religious Sanhedrin, and hence the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people, maintained that ethical teachings are of paramount importance for the reshaping of human nature. They insisted on the fulfillment of the law. *They were* always conscious of the need for equity in the law. They held to the conviction that a state cannot exist unless it is maintained by law and order. Jesus, on the

other hand, not being interested in the state, could appeal to his fellow men in purely ethical terms, relying on moral exhortation, saying: "That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."

The Crucifixion of Jesus

However, despite the disputes and sharp disagreements on many points of law between Jesus and the Pharisees and the uncomplimentary remarks Jesus is credited with having made against the Pharisees, yet the Pharisees are not charged in the Gospels with the crucifixion of Jesus. The charge is made against the priests. Why the priests? Because the priests at that time were the Jewish representatives of political life in the country and worked hand in hand with Rome. The priests during that period did many things which were against the interest of the people. As a matter of fact they were regarded by the populace as Quislings.

When Jesus made his appearance in Jerusalem a few days before Passover, and was proclaimed by the people or proclaimed himself as the Messiah, he created much fear among the priests, the Jewish political leaders. True, the Pharisees or the great portion of the population did not cherish this announcement, and placed little faith in him as the anointed or chosen One to redeem them from their political oppression, at the same time, they had no intention of eliminating him from the scene. For, there were others before him, who made similar claims in those days, as the ones who were sent to bring redemption to their people.

The impression made by Jesus' appearance in Jerusalem was more dramatic, more exciting, than by any other before him. The disturbance he caused around the Temple precincts, attracted the attention of the priests. Fearing that the nation would be accused by Rome of fomenting a revolution against her, the high priest quickly had Jesus arrested, called a

political Sanhedrin in session (This Sanhedrin, unlike the religious Sanhedrin, had no definite place to hold sessions; it had no statutory regulations, as the religious Sanhedrin had; it could be called to session any time of day or night, holyday or Sabbath. This Sanhedrin consisted of men who were called together by the high priest to determine the guilt of the accused. They were in truth merely the "rubber stamps" of the high priest) held court, on the eve of a holiday, contrary to religious law, and not in accordance with Pharisaic tradition, tried him and found him guilty on two counts, blasphemy and Messianic pretensions. Actually he was tried not as a religious offender but rather as a criminal—an agitator against the State. He was proclaimed guilty, when he did not deny that he was the Messiah. He was then turned over to Pilate the Roman Governor of Judea.

Of the two charges which the Sanhedrin brought against Jesus—blasphemy and Messianic pretensions—Pilate took account of the second only. Jesus was the "King-Messiah" and so, from Pilate's standpoint (since he could have no notion of the spiritual side to the Hebrew messianic idea), he was "King of the Jews." This was treason against the Roman Emperor and the prescribed death of rebel traitors was—crucifixion.

Jesus was crucified as the "King of the Jews." The Jewish religious Sanhedrin and the Jewish people had nothing to do with the trial of Jesus. The high priest who actually delivered Jesus to the Roman authorities either was compelled to do so to save himself so as not to be accused of being an accessory to the rebels; or, most likely, Caiaphas, the high priest, played the role of a Quisling who proved ready to sell out Judea to the Romans for personal gain.

The Jewish people were crushed under Roman tyranny. The Roman authorities punished not only the individuals who incited the people against the Romans, but the leaders of the

people as well. The Jewish leaders, we may say, were held as hostages for the submission of the Jewish people to the Roman state. Many Jewish leaders in such circumstances and political conditions had to act as informers against the dissenters and revolutionaries among their brethren in order to save their own lives. Some of them sold themselves entirely to the Roman authorities for their own benefit, as may have been the case of the high priest, Caiaphas.

Pontius Pilate had greatly contributed to increasing of the enmity of the Christians against their own flesh and blood. He it was who added mockery and scorn to the punishment of death; he had bound their Messiah to the cross like the most abject slave, and in derision of his assumed royalty had placed the crown of thorns on his head. The picture of Jesus nailed to the cross, crowned with thorns, the blood streaming from his wounds, was ever present to his followers, filling their hearts with bitter thoughts of revenge. Instead of turning their wrath against cruel Rome, they made the representatives of the Judæan people, and by degrees the whole nation, responsible for inhuman deeds. They either intentionally deceived themselves, or in time really forgot that Pilate was the murderer of their master, and placed the crime upon the heads of all the children of Israel.

Judean Christians

When the disciples of Jesus had somewhat recovered from the panic which came upon them at the time he was seized and executed, they re-assembled to mourn together over the death of their beloved Master. "The followers of Jesus then in Jerusalem did not amount to more than one hundred and twenty, and if all who believed in him in Galilee had been numbered, they would not have exceeded five hundred. Still the effect that Jesus produced upon the unenlightened

masses must have been very powerful; for their faith in him, far from fading away like a dream, became more and more intense, their adoration of Jesus rising to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. The only stumbling-block to their belief lay in the fact that the Messiah who came to deliver Israel and bring to light the glory of the kingdom of heaven, endured a shameful death. How could the Messiah be subject to pain? A suffering Messiah staggered them considerably, and this stumbling-block had to be overcome before a perfect and joyful belief could be reposed in him. It was at that moment probably that some writer relieved his own perplexities and quelled their doubts by referring to a prophecy in Isaiah, that "He will be taken from the land of the living, and will be wounded for the sins of his people." Was it not written that he should be judged among the evil-doers? His disciples declared they had heard Jesus say that he would be persecuted even unto death. Thus his sufferings and death were evident proofs that he was the Messiah. When the faithful were satisfied on that point, it was not difficult to answer the other question which naturally offered itself—When would the promised kingdom of heaven appear, since he who was to have brought it had died on the cross? Hope replied that the Messiah would return in all his glory, with the angels of heaven, and then every one would be rewarded according to his deeds. They believed that some then alive would not taste death until they had seen the Son of Man enter his kingdom. His disciples were hourly expecting the return of Jesus, and only differed from the Judaeans in so far as they thought that the Messiah had already appeared in human form and character. Nothing seemed to stagger their faith in the Messianic character of Jesus; but greatly as they venerated and glorified him, they had not yet raised him above humanity; in spite of the enthusiasm with which he inspired them, they could not look upon him as God. They regarded him only as a highly gifted man who, having obeyed the Law more

completely than any other human being, had been found worthy to be the Messiah of the Lord.

They deviated in no degree from the precepts of Judaism, observing the Sabbath, the rite of circumcision, and the dietary laws, whilst they also revered Jerusalem and the Temple as holy places. They were, however, distinguished from the other Judaeans in some peculiarities besides the belief they cherished that the Messiah had already appeared. To this class belonged the early Christians, or Judaeans Christians, who were called Nazarenes.

The Rise of Christianity

Jesus was a victim of political circumstances. Without Rome, Jesus would never have met the fate he did; nor would he have achieved the fame that he had; nor would have Christianity arisen. Jesus was not despised by the Jews for his religious views as some believe. During the one year of his ministry he had not aroused the nation by his teaching. And the nation was no more overwhelmed by the crucifixion of him, as it was by some of the other Judean sons who met a similar death at the hand of Rome. Had it been otherwise, both the activities of Jesus and his crucifixion would not have escaped the notice of the writers at the time. For there is hardly any reference to Jesus in the Talmud, the Midrash, or in the writings of Josephus, even though events of far lesser importance had then been recorded.

The greatness of Jesus and his impact on the world began after the crucifixion. It was Saul (Paul) of Tarsus, a Pharisee, who combined within himself the finest of Hebraic lore and Hellenic culture, who at first rejected the otherworldliness of Jesus, and was later converted to it, who was responsible for spreading Jesus' name and his religious views within and beyond the borders of Judea.

Saul (Paul) completely divorced the ethical teaching of

Jesus from Judaism, made it into a separate religion, and a separate theology, which had great appeal to the Greek world that was mentally ripe, ready, and willing to accept it.

How The Modern Jew Regards Jesus

Until modern times, the mention of Jesus, stirred up gruesome memories in the mind of the Jew, and not without justifiable cause. Christendom, placed the crucifixion of Jesus at the door of the Jew and for some 2000 years washed the face of the earth with Jewish blood as an act of revenge. The love which Jesus preached, and which Christendom was supposed to have lived by, turned into hate, and the Jew was the target. The Jew therefore shriveled, and shuddered, at the mention of Jesus' name.

Due to the liberal spirit which began to spread in the western world beginning with the 19th century, the situation improved. The attitude toward Jew became more tenable and more tolerant.

In this new climate, Jewish scholarship had an opportunity to review the times of Jesus, his life and his teachings, even though the material outside of the Gospels is skimpy, and the Gospels not completely reliable, since they were recorded at least a generation after Jesus and from memory. Be that as it may, both Jewish and Christian scholars have done a great deal in separating fact from fiction in presenting an account of Jesus, the rise of Christianity, and its fundamental teachings.

"The spirit of enlightenment and sympathy," says Hyman G. Enlow, "has brought about a new era in the relation of the Jews to Jesus. On the one hand, it has caused Christian scholars to revise somewhat the ancient conventional interpretation of the Jewish contemporaries of Jesus, particularly the much-maligned Scribes and Pharisees. On the other hand, it has made it possible for the Christian believer to listen to

a Jew's appraisal of Jesus, and to treat it with respect and without fear of the Jew's eternal damnation, though it differ from his own construction."

This liberal atmosphere of the last one hundred and fifty years has contributed greatly in the creation of a healthier and happier attitude of the Jew toward Jesus as well as of Christians toward the Jew.

Jesus is regarded today by the intelligent, interested Jew, as one of the Jewish people and as one who was a great teacher profoundly concerned with the spiritual welfare of his people. Jews do not regard Jesus as one who renounced Judaism or as the innovator of Christianity. They view him as a devout Jew who disregarded the material life, for a life of the spirit. Jews have never rejected the ethical teachings of Jesus and consider his lessons today as some of the finest in ethical thought. What Jews do not accept however, because of their religious indoctrination from Abraham on, is the divinity of Jesus. Judaism teaches that no human being can ever attain perfection. Man is perfectible but not perfect. No teacher, no prophet, and no leader, has ever been considered divine among the Jews. The central belief in Judaism is the unity of God. God is One, and all human beings are his children and are divine in the sense that they bear His image.

It is the hope of the modern Jew, that the love which Jesus preached, and on which Christianity is predicated, will yet penetrate the Christian world and will eventually serve as a bond between Christian and Jew—who together will set their hands and hearts to the task of establishing God's Kingdom on earth.

MYSTICISM AND JEWISH MYSTICISM

Definitions

"**M**YSTICISM," said Josiah Royce, "is the ferment of the faiths, the forerunner of spiritual liberty, the inaccessible refuge of the nobler heretics, the inspirer, through poetry, of countless youth who know no metaphysics, the teacher, through the devotional books, of the despairing, the comforter of those who are weary of finitude."

"Mysticism" is the art of union "with reality," says Evelyn Underhill.

"Mysticism," says Goethe, "is the scholastic of the heart, the dialectic of the feelings." "The heart has reasons which reason knows nothing of," says Pascal.

Reason for Mysticism

Mysticism, like philosophy, arises from the elemental human desire to search and investigate both natural and spiritual phenomena, and to understand their manifestations more thoroughly. But, while philosophy relies mainly on human reason and accepts it as the standard, mysticism which is permeated with the emotional religious feeling inherent in man, is in addition to reason, actuated by revelation and inspiration.

How Mysticism Began

Mysticism is a stage in the historical development of religion. Primitive man does not know of mysticism. His world is full of visible gods whom he meets on every turn, and whose presence he experiences. In this stage of history there is no gulf between Man and God.

The second stage in the development of the history of religion is still one in which there is no need for mysticism. In this stage, institutional religion is created. Man becomes conscious of God as a Transcendental Being and manages to overcome the gulf between himself and God by the laws which he believes are of God, and through Prayer.

The attempt on the part of man as he advances intellectually and morally, to close the gap between himself and God, the desire to experience God as directly as primitive man once experienced his gods, gave rise to the third stage in the historical growth of religion and it is in this epoch that mysticism emerged.

Characteristics of Mysticism

There is first, the belief in insight as against discursive analytic knowledge: the belief in a way of wisdom, sudden, penetrating, coercive, which is contrasted with the slow study of outward appearance by a science relying wholly upon the senses. While rationalism attempts to solve the ultimate problems of existence by the application of the intellect and the imagination, mysticism takes account of the cravings of the heart and of the soul.

The world of man's pure intellect, consists only of that which is seen and which is temporal. But there is another world transcending it, a world invisible, incomprehensible,

but yet both visible and comprehensible to the soul's craving for communion with the Divine.

The mystic insight begins with the sense of a mystery unveiled, of a hidden wisdom suddenly becoming certain beyond the possibility of doubt.

The second characteristic of mysticism is its belief in unity, and its refusal to admit opposition or division anywhere. Good and evil are one. "The way up and the way down is one and the same."

The third characteristic of mysticism is the denial of the reality of time. Since mystics believe that all is one, it follows that the distinction between past and future is illusory.

The last doctrine of mysticism maintains that all evil is mere appearance, an illusion produced by division. Mysticism does not say that such things as cruelty, for example, are good, but it denies that they are real. They belong to that lower world of phantoms from which we are to be liberated by the insight of the mystical vision.

What is, in all cases, ethically characteristic of mysticism is the absence of indignation, protest, fretting and complaining. The mystic differs from the ordinary religionist in that where as the latter knows God through an objective revelation whether in nature or as embodied in the Bible (which is really only second-hand knowledge, mediate, external, the record of other people's visions and experiences) the mystic knows God by contact of spirit with spirit. He has the immediate vision; he hears the "still small voice" speaking clearly to him in the silence of his soul. In this sense the mystic stands quite outside the field of all the great religions of the world. Religion to him is merely his own individual religion, his own lonely, isolated quest for truth. He is solitary—a soul alone with God. Upon examining the lives and works of mystics, however, we usually find that in spite of the intensely individualistic type of their religion they are related to some one particular religion of the world's religions. The mystical ex-

periences are colored and moulded by some one dominant faith. The specific forms of their conceptions of God do not come from their own inner light only but from the teachings which they imbibe from the external and traditional religion of their race or country. Thus Christian mysticism has characteristics which are *Sui Generis*; so has Mohammedan mysticism; so has Hindu mysticism; and likewise Jewish mysticism.

Jewish Mysticism

“Jewish Mysticism,” says Gershom G. Scholem, “in its various forms represents an attempt to interpret the religious values of Judaism in terms of mystical values. It concentrates upon the idea of the living God who manifests himself in the acts of Creation, Revelation and Redemption.”

Arguments Against Jewish Mysticism

Some theologians as well as ordinary students of religion claim that Judaism and mysticism are contradictory terms—that they stand at opposite poles of thought. The Jew, they argue, could not possibly have that inward experience of God which was made possible to the Christians by the life of Jesus and the teaching of Paul. The God of the Jew, they add, is a law giver. The loyal and conscientious Jew lives, therefore, in the throes of continuous obedience to a string of laws which hedge him round on all sides. Religion becomes a mere outward mechanical routine. God to the Jew is a static fixture. He is isolated from the world of man and can have no bond of union with anyone here below. God is consequently a stranger to the idea of love. Another argument which is raised against the susceptibility of Judaism to mysticism is that Judaism is intensely nationalistic in character, which must of necessity be fatal to mysticism.

Arguments for Jewish Mysticism

"It has been said that every man is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian. This means that there is an innate predisposition in every one of us to assimilate certain fixed forms of thought from which we cannot be diverted, no matter what future training, education, or experience we may receive. The Jews during the Middle Ages, both before and after the appearance of the Zohar, were (largely through the influence of Maimonides) amongst the staunchest supporters of Aristotle. Whilst the Aristotelian philosophy stands immortalized in the writings of the leading Jewish theologians of medieval times, the philosophy of Plato finds but a mere handful of exponents, eminent though these be. Hence there has arisen the commonly accepted belief that Jews are by nature rationalist rather than mystics. . . .

"Judaism is unquestionably and supremely a religion of reason. But paradoxically enough, it only made its appeal to the Jew and held him tightly in its grip because he was—and is—by nature and inclination a mystic. The 'Moreh Nebuchim' of Maimonides was the great Jewish philosophical exposition in the Middle Ages, of the Supremacy of Reason in Judaism. But the Jew in the mass know it not. It was never a people's book. But the 'Zohar' was a people's book. It struck a chord in whose music the Jew heard:

The bubblings of the springs
That feed the world.

And the impress went down to the roots of his being. However much in accord with reason Judaism may have appeared to the Jew, there were always crises and catastrophes in which he felt that reason failed to solve the tantalizing problems involved—problems of pain and suffering, of reward and

punishment, of the relation between the human and the Divine, of the life here and the life hereafter. The Jew, as a pure rationalist, would have quailed in the face of these enigmas; and Judaism might by now have been but a pale memory. But the Jew believed and lived not by logic but by love, not by ratiocination but by intuition. It was by these standards that he was led on

To see one changeless Life in all the Lives,
And in the Separate,
One Inseparable."

Origin of Jewish Mysticism

The fact is that Jewish mysticism is as old as the Old Testament, as old as the oldest parts of the Old Testament. It prevailed in varying degrees of intensity throughout the centuries. It flowed on, uninterrupted, into the era covered by the Rabbinic period, Jewish Medievalism became heirs to it.

Of course, in saying that the Old Testament holds elements of mysticism it must be understood that this mysticism is of an implicit sort and not particularly the type of religion historically known as 'mysticism'.

Some Jewish scholars, including the German-Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, assert that the origins of Jewish mysticism date back not to antiquity, but to the period of Jewish history beginning with the twelfth century. Graetz ascribes the origin of Jewish mysticism to a French Rabbi, Issac ben Abraham—known as Isaac the Blind—of the thirteenth century who lived in Posquieres, France. Isaac is the author of the mystical book "Bahir" (Brightness). This book was followed by another in the 14th century called the Zohar, which is considered as the textbook of Jewish mysticism.

Jewish mysticism reached its greatest achievement in the

Zohar. This book was compiled and published in Spain at the end of the 13th century by Moses de Leon, and was attributed by its compiler to Rabbi Simeon ben Yohai, who lived in Palestine in the second century B.C.E. The reason for this false attribution was Moses de Leon's desire to give the book the sanctity of age and the authority of a Rabbi famous for his mystic knowledge.

The influence of the Zohar was not due solely to the prestige which it derived from its attributed authorship. Much of its authority was derived from the fundamental mystic and human cravings with which it dealt.

The Object of Jewish Mysticism

There have always been men who have sought to penetrate into the mysteries of heaven and earth. The Jewish mystics, in particular, yearned to understand the nature of God and His relationship to man. They were also anxious to find a solution to the more vexing philosophic problems such as: How could a spiritual God create a material world? How could an infinite deity have intercourse with finite creatures? What is the destiny of human existence? In their search for the truth, the Jewish mystics turned to the Bible which was to them the source of all knowledge, especially in the field of divine problems. In the Bible they read the story of their forefathers, the ancient Hebrews and the divine laws which were revealed to them through Moses. Since neither the historical accounts nor the legal injunctions satisfied their yearnings, the Jewish mystics concluded that there must be a deeper, an esoteric meaning which contained the answer to all their questions. Just as the essence of the human being is neither his garments nor his body, but the invisible soul, so did the mystics conclude that the essence of the Torah is neither the historical accounts nor the legal portions, but the hidden teachings.

“There are foolish people who, when they see a man covered with fine clothes, look no further than the garment, and yet it is the body that lends value to the clothes; and still more precious is the soul. The law also has its body. There are commandments that may be called the body of the law, and the ordinary recitals which are mingled with them are the clothes which cover the body. The simple-minded take heed of nothing but the vestments or the recitals of the law; they know nothing else, and do not see what is hidden under this garment. The well-informed think not of the vestment, but of the body that the vestment covers. Finally, the wise, servants of the supreme King are they who dwell upon the heights of Sinai, think of the soul only, which is the foundation of all the rest, and which is the law itself, and in time to come they will be prepared to contemplate the spirit of that spirit which breathes in the law.”

The main object of Jewish mysticism was to square the idea of a spiritual God with a material universe; how to bridge the chasm between an all-perfect God to come into contact with imperfect man.

The search for the answer to this question gave rise to a theory of Sefiroth. These are spheres which emanate from the Divine Essence, and which constitute the active forces of the universe. There are ten such Sefiroth or Emanations. The first three, relate to the spiritual potencies of intelligence and reason as well as to the Divine Spark which presides over them, and which is consequently regarded as the first Divine Emanation and the highest Sefirah. The names of the Sefiroth in this group are Kether (crown), Hokmah (intelligence), and Binah (reason). The next three Sefiroth operate in the realm of the will. They are Hesed (love or kindness), Din (justice), and Tefereth (harmony or beauty), which operates as a balance between the first two. The next group is made up of the three Sefiroth which include the forces of nature: Netsah (energy) Hod (form), and Yessod (foundation or

matter). The tenth and last Sefiroth is Malkuth (Kingdom). This embraces the sphere of historical life that is built upon the other Sefiroth.

Midway between the spiritual forces and material forms stands man who unites within himself all the categories and it is this characteristic that makes him the image of God, the most perfect of all creations in nature. Spirit and matter are harmoniously combined within him.

The Value of Jewish Mysticism

The manner, the form or the symbols resorted to by Jewish mysticism or Kabbalah, to express itself may convey little to us, may have no meaning or message for us. However, the attempt, of Kabbalah to discover and unveil the hidden life beneath the tangible shapes of reality, and to make visible that abyss in which the symbolic nature of all that exists reveals itself, is as important for us today as it was for those ancient mystics. "For as long as nature and man are conceived as His creations, and that is the indispensable condition of highly religious life, the quest for the hidden life of the transcendent element in such creation will always form one of the most important preoccupations of the human mind," says Gershom G. Scholem.

HASIDISM

VICTOR Hugo was right in his belief that nothing is so powerful in this world as an idea whose time has come. Repeatedly in history that truth has been vindicated. Hasidism is one of those ideas that had to come. The hour demanded its emergence.

The Hebrew word, "Hasidism" means "the pious." Hasidism was a revolt among the Jews of Eastern Europe against the excessive causistry of the contemporary Rabbis. It was the protest of an emotional, uneducated people, against a one-sided expression of Judaism, which they did not understand and which excluded the play of feelings and affections so that religion was made almost impossible to them.

Religion can be a source of solace, strength and promise, during trying times, as it proved to be for the Jews in their long and tragic history. For the poor ignorant Jews, in the wild foothills of the Carpathian mountains, in the Ukraine, Judaism, as it was presented to them by their Rabbis, lost its force and appeal. It was too dry, too intellectual, void of the comfort that was so urgent at that time. Besides the daily morsel of bread, there was little else the masses could hope for; crushed as they were between the restive serfs and the grasping Polish lords. That their lot would be improved by the advent of the Messiah, no longer inspired them, since his coming no longer seemed real to them. And, the hope

that they would be rewarded in the hereafter, also faded. For how could they expect to face the Almighty without a mastery of his word, when the Talmudic teachers themselves filled with the knowledge of the Lord were not certain whether their learning and ascetic practices were sufficient enough to merit reward in the hereafter? How much less could an ordinary Jew expect to enjoy his share of bliss in the world to come, driven as he was from pillar to post in the daily struggle against the ever-stalking specter of starvation, unable to study the Torah or to abide by its multiple requirements? How hopeless the ordinary Jew felt under the circumstances is reflected in the following anecdote:

“A travelling pedlar was caught in a blizzard while pursuing his trade. Stumbling through mountainous drifts all day, he finally succeeded by midnight in finding his way to a village, where one house only was still lit. It turned out to be the house of the rabbi, who as was his habit, studied far into the night. The rabbi received the pedlar hospitably, with offers of hot tea and a comfortable lodging. But, now that his physical needs were no longer pressing, the pedlar sensed his spiritual perplexity and inquired of his kind host whether, lacking the pleasures of this world, he, wretch that he was, would at least enjoy the delights of the hereafter. The rabbi, conscious of the mountainous burden of demands that were built up by a host of casuists, replied not unsympathetically as follows: ‘You labor so hard for the things of this world which nevertheless elude you—how then can you expect to share in the bliss of the hereafter for which you labor not at all?’ ”

Thus, the harassed masses of Jewry saw themselves deprived of all consolations, with the redemption of the Messiah looming in the far distance and the bliss of the hereafter dependent on gifts of talent and luxury of leisure that were not available to them. “The very maturity of the Jewish faith, which led it to esteem so highly the exercise of intel-

lectual disciplines, made its compensations seem remote and unreal to those who hungered most passionately for the bread-and-butter consolations of popular faith."

The hour was deeply in need of a man who could redeem Judaism from its dry legalism, and the people from their many fears, ignorance, and strong feeling of abandonment, rejection, and worthlessness. It was a time for a man to relate the people to their God, and bring dignity and self respect into their lives.

Each generation, it is said, produces its leader. The leader for this generation came forth. His name was Israel—Ba-al Shem Tov. His name even today, stirs the hearts of all those who are familiar with the history of that particular period. Who was this man, Israel? What gifts did he possess that qualified him to lead his people, to be their voice, their true representative?

Israel Ba-al Shem Tov

There does not exist a detailed description of the life of the Ba-al Shem. Most of the information that we do have about him, has been handed down orally from one generation to the next. All the flimsy sketches relating to his early life, however, seem to agree, that Israel was born in the year 1700 at Okopy, a small town situated on the border of Podolia and Moldavia.

Israel's parents died when he was a very young child, and having been left without any means of support, he was cared for by the community. When Israel grew older, he became an assistant teacher. His duties however, were not primarily to teach but that of bringing the children to school and returning them to their homes. He won the hearts of the youngsters by his friendliness and through the sacred songs and prayers he taught them and sang with them, as he would accompany them to their homes at the end of the school day.

Through the children's love for him, he also gained the affection of their parents. The reputation which Israel established among the young and the old, gave him after a while, the position of assistant beadle in the Synagogue of his community. At night, after his chores were done, he would remain in the Synagogue for many hours studying the Law, and the Zohar, the book embodying the teachings of Kabbalah which was popular at the time. Hardly anyone suspected that this man who was branded by the Rabbis as lazy and an ignoramus, would some day be remembered as one of the great leaders and saints of his people.

At the age of fifteen, he was married; but his wife died soon after. He left his native town and went to live in a small town near Brody in Eastern Galicia. He chose as his home a hamlet in the Carpathian mountains. Here, he at first sold lime to the people of the surrounding villages, but as his earnings were meager, he became an inn-keeper in a village on the banks of the Prut. Still later, he moved to Tlust, a larger town in Galicia, and again occupied himself as a teacher.

It seems that Israel's wanderings from place to place was not a search for material success. He was actually in search of himself. His mind and heart were occupied with thoughts and ideas which sought expression, and could only organize themselves in the proper order, in unity and harmony, in the right place.

During the years he spent in the villages which were surrounded by woods, mountains and lakes, he acquired a deep appreciation of nature's loveliness and beauty. He was so fascinated by God's handiwork, that in its midst he felt compensated for all his sufferings and sorrow.

Through his immediate contact with nature, he learned how to use certain plants for healing purposes and to effect wonderful cures. Because of his interest in, and love of people, particularly the poor, the forgotten, the ignored and neg-

lected, and through his healthy, cheerful outlook on life, he was also able to help many of them who suffered from melancholia who were mentally disturbed and depressed. Many people flocked to him for help as his fame grew. His personal fame as a healer spread not only among the Jews, but also among the non-Jewish people—peasants and nobles alike. His name came to be known as “Ba-al Shem Tov” (Master of the Good Name).

It was in nature that Israel found himself. From his childhood days on, Israel was drawn to the field and woods. Trees, flowers, birds, mountains, rivers and lakes, fascinated him. In the midst of nature, Israel learned more about himself, man, God and the universe, than any teacher or a library of books could reveal to him. Nature prepared Israel for the task with which his life was to be intertwined, and the leadership he was to assume among his people, and the lessons he was to impart to them at a later date.

Israel was destined to represent, to guide, and lead the generation of his time, especially the people in whose midst he grew up and developed, whose needs he sensed, whose hearts he understood, whose desires, wishes and longings, he could satisfy by his love and kindness, by his beliefs, his spirit, his very life. The character of Israel, his personality, all that he stood for and represented, qualified him for leadership. Though he was not a great scholar, ordinarily a first requisite for Jewish leadership in his day, and although he penned no books, and was no great orator, nevertheless, there was something about the man, in whom people recognized as a true son of God, one in whose soul they saw reflected their own. It sometimes happens that a leader is ahead of the times. In the case of Israel, he was of his period, of the people and for the people.

The Teachings of the Ba-al Shem

Hasidism and the Ba-al Shem are practically synonymous. The man and the movement are one and the same. Hasidism is what the Ba-al Shem propounded, what he taught about man, God, prayer, religion, character, community and the world. Before going into a study of the Ba-al Shem's views on all these matters, it is essential to state that his teachings were not new to Judaism. It is his emphasis of certain Judaic concepts and the unique manner in which he presented these, that give it the appearance and flavor of newness.

The Ba-al Shem's Attitude Toward People

The Rabbis in the day of the Ba-al Shem, were arrogant and looked upon the ignorant and the worker with contempt. In the eyes of the Ba-al Shem all were children of God, all were created in His image, all had the Divine spark in them. Thus he walked among the poor, sympathized with them, brought cheer into their hearts. By his love and compassion he lifted the sinner and the rejected to a higher level of morality. When he was criticized for mingling with every low type, his answer was: "Whoever desires to pull his friend out of the mire must be willing to step into it himself." Ba-al Shem had an unalterable faith in all men and under all conditions and circumstances. "He who loves God" he said, "loves all creatures."

The Ba-al Shem's Observation On God

The Ba-al Shem found God's presence in every animate as well as inanimate thing. All created things and every product of human intelligence owe their being to God. All generation and all existence spring from the thought and will of God. It

is incumbent upon man to believe that all things are pervaded by the divine life. There is nothing that is void of God. God is to be found in the grand manifestations of nature—in the rolling thunder, in the flash of lightning, in the snow clad mountains, in the mighty trees of the forest, as well as in the humblest flower or blade of grass. He is in the simple and unaffected heart of the ignorant peasant as in the wisdom and learning of the scholar.

"It is necessary," he declared, "for man always to bear in mind that God is with him always and everywhere; that He is the master of all that happens in the Universe. Let man realize that when he looks at things material, he beholds in reality the Divine Countenance, which is present everywhere. Keeping this in mind, man will find it possible to serve the Lord in all things, even in trifles."

On Sin

Ba-al Shem viewed sin and infirmity in a very different light from that of the ordinary Rabbi. No sin, he taught, so separates us from God that we need despair of return. Sin, he said, is not to be despised but purified; not to be fled from, but subordinated. Love and tolerance will restore the most hardened sinner to the path of virtue and goodness. To a father who came to Israel to consult him as to what to do with his son who had strayed from God and the Torah, his reply was, "Love him all the more."

On Prayer

Ba-al Shem broke through the fences of the Rabbis who established the hours of divine worship as well as the places for worship. According to the Ba-al Shem, it is not a man's prayer, or the place and time of his uttering it that is important, but the thought and intention that accompany his

prayer. True prayer, the Ba-al Shem is reputed to have said, should not be taken up with one's wishes and needs but should be the means to bring one nigh to God. The wise man, he said, does not trouble the King with innumerable petitions about trifles. His desire is merely to gain admission into the King's presence and to speak with him. To be with the King whom he loves so dearly is for him the highest good. According to Israel, the time and place for prayer is of no importance; neither do the external forms of prayer matter. The importance of prayer is its inwardness. When Israel was reproached for praying long after the appointed time for divine worship, he replied, "Can a child be told when he may approach his father?" And for one who deeply felt the need to pray but did not know how, Israel pointed to the way as indicated in this story:

"A poor village Jew was in the habit of worshipping during the Holy Days in Rabbi Israel's synagogue. He had a slow-witted son who did not master the letters of the Aleph Beth, hence his father would not take him to the synagogue. But when the boy became thirteen he was allowed to accompany his father to the House of God on the Day of Atonement. The boy took a reed and made himself a flute. When the congregation chanted the prayers, he asked his father to allow him to play upon it but he was forbidden to do so. When the Neilah service came, the atmosphere in the synagogue grew tense and warm and the hearts of the worshippers melted like candles in their clay sockets. The boy could no longer contain himself, and taking out the flute, he sang and played upon it. The whole congregation stood terrified by this desecration of the service, but Rabbi Israel was happy and called out: 'The cloud is pierced and broken, and the power of the Evil One is shattered.'"

If a Jew was disturbed because he could not concentrate properly on his prayers, due to his poverty, or inability to comprehend the full meaning of his prayers, or if he was

guilt-stricken because he had to shorten his prayers during divine worship, as he had to be at the market place at a certain hour, he found comfort in this story Ba-al Shem once told his followers: "In the same house there once lived a Talmud-scholar and a simple Jewish workman. Both arose very early every morning. The scholar went to the prayer-house and the workman to his toil. The scholar sat in the prayer-house for hours studying the Holy Books and praying until the dinner hour. And then well satisfied with the fulfillment of his duties to God, he returned home. On his way he met his neighbor returning tired and exhausted from his work; the workman had only a few minutes in which he could go to the prayer-house and say his morning prayer. The Talmud-scholar looked at him with contempt, and thought of the great difference between them—he studying so hard and so long in the Holy Books, and praying so diligently and this simple man had been busy all the morning with coarse work, and had only just said his morning prayer. The workman sighed, fearing for himself when he looked upon his neighbor the Talmud-scholar who had left the house early in the morning, at the same time as he, and had all these hours been occupied only with holy things, whilst he had been at his hard work.

"Weeks, months and years passed in this way. The Talmud scholar died and not long after, the workman died too. The scholar was called before the heavenly Judge: 'What hast thou done during thy life?' he was asked. 'I spent my life in the study of the Talmud and in prayer' he replied, 'I observed all the laws to the smallest detail.' And he stood back well satisfied. 'He despised his neighbor, the workman, who had no time to pray and did not have the knowledge of the Talmud,'—intervened the celestial counsel. The scales were brought out; all the Talmud studies and the prayers were placed on one side, and on the other his contempt for the workman. And behold! the contempt weighed down the scale

on its side and a heavenly voice said: 'The Talmud scholar has no place in Paradise.'

"Then the workman came up. 'What hast thou done during thy life?' he was asked. And he answered with bowed head: 'All my life has been spent in hard work. I had to earn my bread by the sweat of my brow to provide for my wife and children,—and therefore I had no time to say my prayers properly.' 'But he always looked enviously towards his neighbor, the Talmud scholar, sighing and full of humility,' intervened the celestial counsel. And behold! a divine voice cried aloud: 'Bring the workman into Paradise.'"

On Study

One of the cardinal mitzvot in Judaism, is study. Study, however, was not meant to be an end in itself. The end of study is the acquisition of understanding and discernment; to know right from wrong. The end of study is the proper act. "Not learning," say the Rabbis, "but the act is the important thing."

Hasidism, which made its appeal to the common people, by dint of circumstances, minimized study and stressed the act. "In all the deeds of man, speaking and looking and listening, teaching, prayer, and sleeping are all one, and by it he can raise the soul to its root."

The Torah is eternal, said Ba-al Shem, but its explanation is to be made by the spiritual leaders of Judaism. It is to be interpreted by them in accordance with the attribute of the age. For he regarded the world as governed in every age by a different attribute of God—one age by the attribute of Love, another by that of Power, a third again by Beauty, and so on—and the explanation of the Torah must be brought into agreement with it.

Unto those who were able and inclined to study the Torah, the Master advised them thusly: "We should study

the Torah, not as we study a science for the sake of acquiring knowledge, but we should learn from it the true service of God. The study of Torah is not an end in itself."

Humility

The teachings of the Ba-al Shem are embodied in three main principles and these are the foundation of Hasidism. The first is "Humility." "It should be indifferent to man," said the Ba-al Shem, "whether he be praised or blamed, loved or hated, reputed to be the wisest of mankind or the greatest of fools. The test of the real service of God is that it leaves behind it the feeling of humility." Humility according to the Ba-al Shem, is expressed by thinking highly of one's neighbor and humbly of oneself. The true lover of God, he preached, is also the lover of man. It is ignorance of one's errors that makes one ready to see the errors of others. Humility is one's awareness of his own foibles, weaknesses, temptations and fallibility, and the viewing of the faults of others with sympathy, kindness and compassion. He is truly humble who feels for the other as for himself and sees in himself the other. Humility is an antidote to haughtiness. The haughty man is not he who knows himself but he who compares himself with others. The arrogant and haughty man sits in judgment over those faults in others by which he himself is identified. "If Messiah should come today," said a follower of the Ba-al Shem, "and say, 'You are better than the others,' then I would say to him, 'You are not the Messiah.'"

Cheerfulness

The second principle of Hasidism is "Cheerfulness." Judaism advocates *Simchah*—joy, a happy attitude toward life; God is to be served with a smile so to speak, as the Psalmist

said, "Serve the Lord with gladness," and as the Talmud suggests, "The Schekinah rests upon a person, not when he is sad, depressed, but only when he is joyous in the awareness of doing the will of God."

These lessons on how to face life, on how to serve God, taught by Judaism for centuries, had to be taught once again to the sad Jews of Eastern Europe. Their hard life and lot forced them to forget how to live and how to laugh. Cheerfulness became therefore a vital virtue in the teachings of the Ba-al Shem; in the Torah of Hasidism. "Even if one has stumbled into sin," said the Master, "he should not give way to sadness, which negates the value of anything he might do, but let him confine his regrets to the sinful act and return in joy to the service of the Creator."

Asceticism is foreign to the spirit of Judaism. Judaism is a religion of life and concerns itself with this world. It urges the Jew to taste of the joys of life, satisfy his biological as well as spiritual needs and seek thereby self-fulfillment. But in the course of history asceticism found its way into the Jewish community. The greatest source which influenced ascetic practices among Jews was of course Kabbalah (Jewish Mysticism). Fasting, penance, prolonged sessions of prayer, and a host of other rites and rituals, became common practices among the Jews.

Thus we find the Ba-al Shem addressing himself to one of his disciples advising him on the matter of his ascetic exercises; "I hear you think yourself compelled from religious motives to enter upon a course of fasts and penances. My soul is outraged at your determination. By the counsel of God, I order you to abandon such dangerous practices, which are but the outcome of a disordered brain. Is it not written, 'Thou shalt not hide thyself from thine own flesh?'—Fast then no more than is prescribed. Follow my command and God shall be with you!"

On another occasion, Ba-al Shem was heard saying that

Satan's objective is to drive one into a condition of gloom and despondency and keep him away from the true service of God, which can be done only from a happy and confident disposition.

Enthusiasm

The third principle of Hasidism, is "Enthusiasm." Enthusiasm unlocks the meaning of life. Without it even heaven has no meaning and no being. "If a man has fulfilled the whole of the teaching and all the commandments but has not had the rapture and the inflaming, when he dies and passes beyond, paradise is opened to him, but because he has not felt rapture in the world, he also does not feel it in paradise."

Every action to be of any avail must be done with enthusiasm. From the conception of Enthusiasm springs the quality of mobility, suggesting progress. "Man," said the Ba-al Shem, "should not imagine himself to have attained the level of the righteous; let him rather regard himself as a penitent who should make progress every day. Always to remain on the same religious plane, merely repeating today the religious routine of yesterday, is not true service. There must be a daily advance in the knowledge and love of the Divine Master."

Ectasy or Enthusiasm is an outpouring of love. It is an expression of the best self through action. Enthusiasm is infectious; it touches hearts and links hands, to create, to build, to overcome obstacles, to enrich and to ennoble. Enthusiasm brings heaven closer to earth and lifts the earthly heavenward. Enthusiasm marches forward. It sees a bright day, a bright world ahead. Enthusiasm is courage, confidence, and faith, combined.

Every principle, every doctrine, propounded by the Ba-al Shem, he best communicated with the aid of a story, a saying, or a parable. To make his point on the value of Enthusiasm,

he told his followers this parable: "There was a King who built a glorious palace. By means of magical illusion it seemed as if the palace were full of devious corridors and mazes, preventing the approach to the royal presence. But as there was much gold and silver heaped up in the entrance halls, most people were content to go no further, but take their fill of treasure. The King himself they did not notice. At last the King's intimate had compassion upon them and exclaimed to them, 'All these walls and mazes which you see before you do not in truth exist at all. They are mere illusions. Push forward bravely and you shall find no obstacle.'"

Through his love, piety, humility, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, and understanding, Ba-al Shem succeeded in lifting a large portion of his depressed brethren from the depths of despair, giving them fresh hope, a healthy outlook on life, and uniting them into a community of fellowship.

Hasidism taught that each person was needed by his brother, needed by God, for each, according to the Master was unique; and the uniqueness of each was necessary to the welfare and happiness of the whole community. How important each was to the whole, Ba-al Shem impressed upon them with this parable: "Some men stood under a very high tree. And one of the men had eyes to see. He saw that in the top of the tree stood a bird, glorious with genuine beauty. But the others did not see it. And a great longing came over the man to reach the bird and take it; and he could not go from there without the bird. But because of the height of the tree this was not in his power, and a ladder was not to be found. Still out of his great and powerful longing he found a way. He took the men who stood around him and placed them on top of one another, each on the shoulder of a comrade. He however, climbed to the top so that he reached the bird and took it. And although the men had helped him, they knew nothing of the bird and did not see it. But he, who knew it and saw it, would not have been able to reach it without them. If more-

over, the lowest of them had left his place, then those above would have fallen to the earth."

Both Jew and Judaism benefited by the life of the Ba-al Shem. Both were revitalized, both strengthened. His beautiful thoughts on God, prayer, life, sin and evil, enriched Hebraic literature. In a critical essay on modern Hebrew literature, the Jewish philosopher Ahad Ha-am wrote around 1900, "To our shame we must admit that if today we want to find even a shadow of original Hebrew literature, we must turn to the literature of Hasidism. There one occasionally encounters, in addition to much that is purely fanciful, true profundity of thought which bears the mark of the original Jewish genius."

The Decline of Hasidism

Despite the grandiose teachings of the Ba-al Shem, Hasidism, the movement associated with his name, was destined to decay. Because its life depended unfortunately, not so much on its wonderful doctrines, exciting ideas, as on the personality of its leader, its mentor, whom the Hasidism called the Zaddik (the righteous one).

The Zaddik among the Hasidism took the place of the traditional Rabbi. The Zaddik was their symbol of the man who was next to God. They looked upon him as the intermediary between God and man. Through him they felt assured of salvation. They regarded him as the paragon of virtue. They raised him above criticism and a holy and mystical motive was imputed to all his actions. He might have been greedy and devoid of spirituality, but this did not matter, for he could not be criticized; his actions had to be interpreted as an attempt on his part to redeem the sparks of holiness imprisoned in material things and to restore them to their source. The qualifications of the Zaddik were never fully defined. Because Hasidism made Zaddikism hereditary, bestowing it upon the descendants of saintly men without

requiring from them any qualifications, Zaddikism, therefore, became a corroding and degenerating influence on Hasidism, and ultimately led to its decay.

After his death, the Ba-al Shem was succeeded by such men as: Rabbi Baer of Meseritz; Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Polona; Rabbi Nahum of Tchernobyl; Rabbi Shneur Salomon of Ladi; Rabbi Nahman of Bratzlav, and a number of others, who caught his spirit and were worthy of leadership; but the first blush of the movement went with the passing of its founder.

What remains of Hasidism today, is a rich treasury of legends told by the Zaddikim to their disciples, and stories told by the Hasidim about their leaders.

A fitting story with which to end this paper is the one told by the Hebrew novelist S. J. Agnon and retold by G. G. Scholem in his book, "Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism." When the Ba-al Shem had a difficult task before him, he would go to a certain place in the woods, light a fire and meditate in prayer—and what he had set out to perform was done. When a generation later the 'Maggid' of Meseritz was faced with the same task he would go to the same place in the woods and say: We can no longer light the fire, but we can still speak the prayers—and what he wanted done became reality. Again a generation later Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov had to perform this task. And he too went into the woods and said: We can no longer light a fire, nor do we know the secret meditations belonging to the prayer, but we do know the place in the woods to which it all belongs—and that must be sufficient; and sufficient it was. But when another generation had passed and Rabbi Israel of Rishin was called upon to perform the task, he sat down on his golden chair in his castle and said: We cannot light the fire, we cannot speak the prayers, we do not know the place, but we can tell the story of how it was done. And, the story-teller adds, the

story which he told had the same effect as the actions of the other three.

"You can say if you will," says Gershom G. Scholem, "that this profound little anecdote symbolizes the decay of a great movement. You can also say that it reflects the transformation of all its values, a transformation so profound that in the end all that remained of the mystery was the tale. That is the position in which we find ourselves today, or in which Jewish Mysticism finds itself. The story is not ended, it has not yet become history, and the secret life it holds can break out tomorrow in you or in me. Under what aspects this invisible stream of Jewish Mysticism will again come to the surface we cannot tell."

PHILOSOPHY AND JEWISH PHILOSOPHIC CONCEPTS

PHILOSOPHY means "love of wisdom." More fully it may be defined in Professor W. A. Sinclair's words as "the attempt to understand the universe, and ourselves, and our place in the universe."

Philosophy concerns itself with such questions as—these: Has the universe any unity of plan or purpose, or is it a transitory accident on a small planet on which life must ultimately become impossible? Are good and evil of importance to the universe or only to man?

Philosophy seeks to study these questions impartially, not desiring to arrive at results which are comfortable and flattering to human conceit, nor to construct a universe which is conformable with human wishes. On the contrary, it endeavours to maintain a modest attitude toward objective fact and to discover truth without fear or favour.

But it cannot be maintained that Philosophy has had any very great measure of success in its attempts to provide definite answers to its questions.

Philosophers seem to be in disagreement on everything, even on the first principles of philosophy. Each one goes his own way. They question every matter of common assent, and their answers are conflicting. A philosopher who is can-

did will confess that his study has not achieved positive results such as has been achieved by other sciences.

The value of philosophy however, does not depend upon any supposed body of definitely ascertainable knowledge to be acquired by those who study it.

Science, it has been observed provides us with means, more and more powerful means, more and more wondrous means. How or what does philosophy add to our welfare?

It must be admitted that philosophy will not add one iota to our material welfare. It will not enlarge our incomes; nor will it help us to become social successes.

A knowledge of Philosophy does not affect our lives directly. The political philosopher is not particularly a better citizen or statesman than his neighbor. The morals of the ethical philosopher are not especially superior to those of the ordinary man. A knowledge of all the ethical systems that have been advanced since man began to moralize will not make the philosopher a good man.

What then is the value and importance of philosophy? The influence of philosophy is indirect. "If the study of philosophy has any value at all for others than students of philosophy," says Bertrand Russell, "it must be only indirectly, through its effects upon the lives of those who study it. It is in these effects, therefore, if anywhere, that the value of philosophy must be primarily sought."

Philosophy, which raises doubts about what has hitherto been taken for granted, keeps alive the sense of wonder and restores mystery to the world. By diminishing our certainty as to what is, it enormously increases the possibility of what may be, thus it makes life more interesting, not on account of the answer it provides to the questions it raises, but because by the mere process of raising such questions, it liberates us from the dominance of the actual and sets us on the threshold of the region of emancipating thought.

The life of the instinctive man is shut up within the

circle of his private interests, family and friends, but the outer world is not regarded except as it may help or hinder what comes within the circle of instinctive wishes. In such a life there is something feverish and confined, in comparison with which the philosophic life is calm and free. "The man who has no acquaintance with philosophy," says C. E. M. Joad, "goes through life imprisoned in the prejudices, the preferences, the habitual beliefs derived from the society in which he happens to have been born and the period in which he lives." But do we not live in a world and in a period in which facts and figures are what really count? Is it not more advantageous to depend upon the sciences which offer us exact data which we can put to use and to our immediate material advantage? Anything that is beyond utility has no place in our society—runs the argument. If it were true that philosophy is completely divorced from science, that it has no interest in the facts accumulated by science, it could not function. However, there is a distinction between philosophy and science.

In distinguishing philosophy from the sciences, it may not be amiss to guard against the possible misunderstanding that philosophy is concerned with a subject-matter different from and in some obscure way transcending, the subject-matter of philosophy.

Philosophy has no other subject-matter than the nature of the real world, as the world lies around us in every day life, and lies open to observers on every side. But if this is so, it may be asked what function can remain for philosophy when every portion of the field is already lotted out and enclosed by specialist? Philosophy claims to be the science of the whole; but if we get the knowledge of the part from the different sciences, what is there left for philosophy to tell us? To this it is sufficient to answer generally that the synthesis of the parts is something more than that detailed knowledge of the parts in separation which is gained by the man of

science. It is with the ultimate synthesis that philosophy concerns itself: it has to show that the subject-matter which we are dealing with in detail really is a whole, consisting of articulated members. The relationship between sciences and philosophy is of reciprocal-influence. The sciences may be said to furnish philosophy with its matter, but philosophical criticism reacts upon the matter thus furnished, and transforms it. Such transformation is inevitable, for the parts only can exist and can only be fully and truly known in their relation to the whole.

The task of the philosopher is to coordinate all the departments of knowledge. For the philosopher is essentially the man who in Plato's description of him, takes a "synoptic," or comprehensive view of the universe as a whole.

Psychology, sociology, and anthropology, afford us invaluable and ever-growing material dealing with the behavior of individual and collective man and with the basic components of human life and civilization. This is an immense help in our effort to penetrate the world of man. But all this material and this conglomeration of facts would be of no avail if it were not interpreted as to enlighten us on what MAN IS. And this task of coordination and interpretation is the work of the philosopher.

Philosophy is not satisfied with the mere coordination of the data produced by the various sciences; it inquires into their meaning. After combining the experiences of the scientist, the artist, the poet, and the common man, it seeks to learn what the nature of the universe must be in which such experiences are possible. In short, the philosopher is interested not so much in the facts which are made available to him, as in their meaning, their significance. The work of the philosopher begins where the scientist leaves off.

While the facts are the same for all the philosophers, their assessment of them, their valuation of them, are not always the same. For in giving meaning to a set of facts, the

philosopher injects his temperament and character in the act of assessment. This is one of the common reasons for the disagreement among the philosophers on some of the basic questions of life's purpose or man's place in the universe or good and evil. However, the fact, that no agreed answer has yet been discovered to the most fundamental questions cannot but suggest to the honest thinker that all systems of philosophy hitherto constructed are in some degree false.

The philosopher, aware of the conjectural knowledge which he attains through his search and study, is, nevertheless, not discouraged. His search for truth and not essentially its attainment is what he considers his reward.

The philosopher's dedication to, and endless search for truth, not only offers him personal satisfaction, but it also indirectly benefits society and particularly the democratic pattern of life.

Truth and freedom are inseparable, one depends upon the other, and both are the basic elements of democracy. To attain truth, a condition of guaranteed freedom must be present in society. For truth is not attained at once; and in instances it is never attained. But its pursuit is based upon tireless examination, analysis, questioning, evaluation, and criticism. Only in a free society is this made possible.

Freedom presupposes enlightenment. Freedom and enlightenment are strong allies. They are intertwined. Through enlightenment one becomes conscious of himself, his rights and his responsibilities, that otherwise remain dormant. An enlightened person has the capacity to rule himself, he will not tolerate slavery, and will not allow himself to be used as a means by anyone including the State.

Whenever and wherever freedom of thought is lacking then and there, justice and truth are also lacking, slavery prevails, despotism is in the saddle, might is right, and human dignity is trampled upon.

That society which concerns itself with truth, and

encourages its pursuit in every area of life, preserves philosophy and at the same time, preserves freedom and democracy.

Two aspects of the function of the philosopher in society have, it seems to me, special significance today. They have to do with Truth and Freedom.

The great danger which threatens modern societies is a weakening of the sense of truth. On the one hand men become so accustomed to thinking in terms of stimuli and responses, and adjustment to environment, on the other hand they are so bewildered by the manner in which the political techniques of advertising and propaganda use the words of the language, that they are tempted finally to give up any interest in truth: only practical results, or sheer material verification of facts and figures, matter for them, without internal adherence to any truth really grasped. And we see how, behind the Iron Curtain, scientific truth, be it a question of biology or linguistics and even the inner truth of a man's conscience and convictions, are made subservient to the sweet will of the state, which bends and changes them as it pleases. The philosopher who in pursuing his speculative task pays no attention to the interests of men, or of the social group, or of the state, reminds society of the absolute and unbending character of Truth.

As to Freedom, he reminds society that freedom is the very condition for the exercise of thought. And this is a requirement of the common good, which disintegrates as soon as fear, superseding inner conviction, imposes a kind of shibboleth upon human minds. Well, the philosopher, even when he is wrong, at least freely criticizes many things his fellow men are attached to. Socrates bore witness to this function of criticism, which is inherent in philosophy. Even though society showed its gratitude to him in quite a peculiar way, he remains the great example of the philosopher in society.

No, philosophy does not benefit man directly, but because it seeks to know the significance of the facts under its scrutiny, it indirectly benefits man by questioning the value of the ends he aims at. Once thought is aroused and stimulated, it leads to improved standards in ethics morality, politics and government, yes, in every area of human endeavour.

"Our trust must after all be in thought, and not in instinct" says John Dewey, "how could instinct adjust us to the increasingly artificial environment which industry has built around us, and the maze of intricate problems in which we are enmeshed? Physical science has for the time being far outrun psychical. We have mastered the physical mechanism sufficiently to turn out possible goods we have not gained a knowledge of the conditions through which possible values become actual in life, and so are still at the mercy of habit, of haphazard, and hence of force. . . . With tremendous increase in our control of nature, in our ability to utilize nature for human use and satisfaction, we find the actual realization of ends the enjoyment of values, growing unassured and precarious. At times it seems as though we were caught in a contradiction; the more we multiply means the less certain and general is the use we are able to make of them."

The Rise of Jewish Philosophy

If philosophy means love of wisdom, if pursuit after the truth is the philosopher's main objective, then it can be safely stated that the Jews have a special passion for philosophy and a natural philosophic tendency. Jews have been described as "the people of the Book." They are lovers of wisdom. "The beginning of wisdom," says the author of the book of Proverbs, "is to acquire wisdom." Jews respect learning and hold the learned in high regard.

As a result of this tendency they have produced the Bible —(a library of books). They have developed an elaborate system of ethical and moral laws and teachings as reflected in the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the midrash. Yet, despite the Jews' strong interest in matters of the spirit, and despite their unprecedented love of wisdom, they have not in the technical sense of the term produced an organized system of philosophy in their early history, such as is associated with the Greeks.

"The fact of the matter is," says Isaac Husik, "the Bible is not a systematic book, and principles and problems are not clearly and strictly formulated even in the domain of ethics which is its strong point."

Systematized thinking begins in Jewish history in the tenth century. Why did it not begin at an earlier date and why does a Jewish philosophy begin to emerge at this period?

It seems that a pressing need for a system of philosophy did not arise in Jewry previous to the tenth century. Only when one's beliefs, convictions, ideas, and way of life are questioned, or come under attack, does he commence to analyze, weigh, measure, and compare his way of life against that of the attacker. It is then that he prepares a defense using all the logic and mental prowess at his command, against the opponent aiming to prove his outlook to be correct.

When people of two conflicting cultures meet, their genius is usually stimulated to attempt either a defense of their respective cultures or a reconciliation of their differences. If these attempts are executed by well-sustained logical and systematic argumentation, they become contributions to their national philosophic literatures.

"It was thus with Judaism when it first came in contact with Hellenic culture in the Diaspora, especially in Egypt, that a religious philosophy was born, the greatest representative of which was Philo. With the disappearance of that Dias-

pora, its philosophy fell likewise unto desuetude, and the very name of the great Philo was almost forgotten from Jewish literature."

As long as Judaism remained free from doubters, skeptics, atheists, within its own household and with little intrusion from without, there was no cause to give too much thought to the validity of its doctrines tenets and practices.

Beginning with the tenth century and onward, the situation changed. By this time, the influence of Greek philosophy began to tell its effects upon Jewish thought both from within as well as from without. From within, both the Bible and the Talmud came under attack. From without, there were two religions; Christianity and Mohammedanism both offshoots of Judaism, which were constantly challenging the mother religion and claiming superiority over it. This condition necessitated a defense on the part of Judaism, if it were to preserve itself. The defense emerged in the form of a Jewish philosophy.

Jewish Philosophic Concepts

The Jewish philosophers of the Medieval Period can be classified as follows: Kalamists, Neo-Platonists, Aristotelians and Anti-Rationalists.

The Kalamists

Kalam is the name given to a system of doctrine which originated among the Arabs in the ninth century and continued until the eleventh. They were the first to add reason as an aid in arriving at true knowledge. In conformity with their reliance on reason they elaborated proofs for the existence of God. Saadiah of Fayum (892-942), belongs to the Kalamists school of Medieval Jewish philosophers. His phi-

losophy is presented in his book *Emunot ve Deot* (Beliefs and Opinions).

The Neo-Platonists

Plotinus was the founder of the Neo-Platonists school of thought in the third century. As the name indicates it was a return to Plato in the sense of being a spiritualistic philosophy which regarded the material, the concrete, and the sensible, as unreal and as a source of evil. The intelligible alone is real and good. By intelligible they meant that which can be grasped by intellect alone and not by the five senses. The Neo-Platonists, went even beyond Plato in assuming that, that which can be apprehended by intellectual thinking is not the highest reality, that beyond the intelligible is the transcendent, which cannot be subsumed under the categories of thought. This is God, the unknowable. But though God cannot be known as we understand knowledge, an exceptional individual may in rare instances reach the state of enthusiasm or ecstasy in which, losing consciousness of himself as an individual, he may momentarily enter into a mystic union with the source of all being.

The chief Jewish representative of the Neo-Platonic philosophy, is Solomon Ibn Gabirol (1021-58) Gabirol's *Fons Vitae* is completely Neo-Platonic. Others who belong to the same school of thought are: Isaac Israeli (855-955) Moses Ibn Ezra (1070-1138) and Abraham Ibn Ezra (1092-1167).

The Aristotelians

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) was a Greek philosopher and teacher of Alexander the Great. Aristotle was the first to delimit the boundaries of the various branches of philosophy and to treat them systematically. Logic, physics, psychology,

biology, metaphysics, ethics politics, rhetoric, and poetics, are all rigidly distinguished and each of them has a treatise or treatises devoted to it in the extant works of Aristotle.

The most important part of the Aristotelian philosophy for the Jewish theologians was his idea of God. His was the first scientific attempt to prove the existence of God irrespective of the religious motive. It took the place of Kalamistic proofs of the earlier writers and prepared the downfall of that system of doctrine.

The Jewish thinkers of the Medieval Period who are identified as Aristotelians are: Abraham Ibn Daud (1110-80), Moses Maimonides (1135-1204), and Gersonides or Levi ben Gerson (1288-1344).

The Anti-Rationalists

Jewish thinkers who refused to follow the line of the Neo-Platonists and the teaching of Aristotle, are identified as Anti-Rationalist. To this school of thought belongs Hasdai Crescas and Judah Halevi. The Anti-Rationalists argued thusly: Judaism is not a rationalistic philosophy, its purpose is not to impart theoretical information. Judaism is a mode of life based upon the historic fact of the Divine Revelation to Moses and Israel on Sinai and His election of the people of Israel to bear testimony to His existence and will. The prophets are the teachers of Israel and not the philosophers. The prophets knew God directly and not through logical inference.

Judah Halevi, one of the representatives of the Jewish Anti-Rationalists passes in review all the principal doctrines of the philosophy current in his day and subjects them to a rigorous and unsympathetic criticism. Some of these theories, he shows, are arbitrary and without any evidence, while others are clearly untenable as they do not account for the facts.

The philosophic movement among the Jews in the Middle

Ages, began to decline in the fifteenth century. There were sporadic individuals in the following centuries who wrote on philosophic questions and related them to the Bible and Talmud, or who interpreted the Bible in philosophic fashion, but the philosophical movement as such had spent its force.

Not until the fourth and fifth decade of the nineteenth century, did thinkers like Salamo Ludwig Steinheim, Solomon Formstecher, and Samuel Hirsh appear with new attempts at a Jewish philosophy of religion, attempts which had their basis in the various systems of German philosophy. These attempts, however, despite their valuable contributions, had no influence upon the inner development of Judaism.

Other individuals who in modern times endeavoured to lay a general philosophical basis for Judaism are: Nachman Krochmal (1785-1840), Asher Ginzberg (Ahad-Ha-Am, 1856-1927), the philosopher of Zionism and Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), a founder of the Marburg School.

It is extremely doubtful whether in the present status of Jewry, divided and dispersed as it is, and the extreme individualism of the modern Jew, a philosophy of Judaism is possible which will appeal to more than a very small minority.

PART II

Reflections

There is one art of which every man should be a master
—the art of reflection.

—If you are not a thinking man. to what purpose are
you a man at all?—Coleridge.

ON JEWISH WORSHIP

IN worship, a Jew does more than extol the name of the Lord, give expression to his sorrow, seek solace and comfort in his hour of trial.

Besides acting as a therapeutic, Jewish worship also teaches. For when a Jew prays, he simultaneously learns. The prayers in the Prayer Book, serve as arrow signs pointing to the different ages and stages of Jewish history.

By way of a word, a phrase, a verse, or a whole prayer, a great event, a basic doctrine, a high ideal, is flashed before the mind of the worshipper.

In one prayer, for example, the lesson of Monotheism is brought to his attention. In another, it is the going forth from Egypt that engages his attention. In yet another, he imagines himself standing at Mt. Sinai hearing God's voice; receiving the Law and pledging to live by it. In a fourth, he listens to the voice of the prophets urging and demanding the establishment of a society based on justice, truth and peace; a world united in brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God. In a fifth, he joins his people in their long, tedious, perilous march, from land to land, suffering humiliation, disparagement, bodily injury and mental torture.

The Prayer Book is a mirror reflecting the soul of Judaism. It is an Anthology of God's commandments to Israel, and Israel's response to His charge. The Prayer

Book is the podium from which the prophet, the mystic, the psalmist, the law giver, the teacher, the poet, and philosopher, each takes his turn in speaking, inspiring, instructing, and enlightening the worshipper in relation to his duty toward his God and fellow man.

For many generations the Prayer Book served as the school, the guide, the teacher, and the preacher, for the common man.

Lewis N. Dembits, in his book on "Jewish Services in the Synagogue and the Home," has this to say about Jewish worship: "Many loyal and well meaning Jews were disabled by poverty, lack of teachers, or lack of talent and taste from deeper study. To these it was thought good to furnish a minimum; they might acquire a substitute for real learning. . . . Hence the sages of Israel placed in the service book, to be read every day or at stated times, other passages from the Tora and some Mishna and Baraitha, so that everybody should do some studying."

In Jewish worship, the Jews of all lands become one by destiny, belief, hope, and courage. The past becomes the present. The present flows into the past, and the eyes of all, turn to the future with a promise, a dream, and hope in their hearts.

Jewish worship is more than mere expression of belief in God. It is rather an affirmation of a way of life, which flows from Judaism—the Jewish religion. Through worship—a Jew studies.

ON PRAISING GOD

WIT is good to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High." Offering thanks unto God is important to the equanimity and peace of the soul.

People usually think of the things they want or need. One who is in a desiring, wishing state of mind, intent on receiving, is also in a state of anxiety, disturbed, and melancholy.

It is when one concentrates on the things he has, that he realizes his good fortune and begins to feel good.

The praise we offer God is not for His sake but for our own benefit. God certainly does not need our compliments. By praising God we become conscious of the blessings that are ours.

In becoming aware of our blessings, we simultaneously give thought to the powers within us, our abilities which helped us to gain these blessings. The future begins to look more promising; confidence is regained; hope is stimulated; inspiration is renewed; success beckons from a distance. Thus through praise and thanks for things achieved, the things we miss and want, do not then appear beyond our reach.

If we are truly appreciative of the good already realized in our lives, we cease to be daunted by our knowledge of the fact that hope will always outrun attainment, because we know, that in the pursuit of our hopes, we shall meet with

experiences like those with which we have already met, that will make life worthwhile for us.

The Jew is taught to praise God which serves him as a source of solace, fortitude, and faith.

"We gratefully acknowledge, O Lord our God, that Thou art our Creator and Preserver, the Rock of our life and the Shield of our help. We render thanks unto Thee for our lives which are in Thy hand, for our souls which are ever in Thy keeping, for Thy wondrous providence and for Thy continuous goodness, which Thou bestowest upon us day by day. Truly, Thy mercies never fail and Thy loving-kindness never ceases. Therefore do we forever put our trust in Thee."

ON FAITH AND JEWISH FAITH

When God wants to punish a man, he deprives him of faith.

Ba-al Shem

FAITH does not exist by itself. It is rooted in some doctrine. It is inspired by some belief or conviction. The man of faith is governed by principles. These principles are his inner light which propel and guide him toward his chosen goal. Where there is faith there is determined will and achievement.

"All the great ages," says Ralph W. Emerson, "have been ages of belief. I mean when there was any extraordinary power of performance, when great national movements began, when arts appeared, when heroes existed, when poems were made, the human soul was in earnest, and had fixed its thoughts and spiritual verities with as strict a grasp as that of the hands on the sword, or the pencil, or the trowel."

Where there is a man of faith there is a plan, a program, a dream and a message, for those who are to come after him. Says Dana Burnet:

"The dreamer dies, but never dies the dream.
Though death shall call the whirlwind to his aid.
Enlist men's passions, trick their hearts with hate—
That dreams are fragile things. What else endures—
Of all this broken world save only dreams."

Where there is a man of faith, fear turns into courage, and darkness into light; weakness is converted into strength, and hate into love; ugliness is transmuted into beauty, slavery conquered by freedom, and war by peace.

"My life," writes Helen Keller, "was without past or future; death the pessimist would say, 'a consummation devoutly to be wished.' But a little word from the fingers of another fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness, and my heart leaped to the rapture of living. Night fled before the day of thought, and love and joy and hope came up in a passion of obedience to knowledge. Can anyone who has felt the thrill and glory of freedom, be a pessimist?"

Faith is the dominant characteristic of the Jewish people. The faith of the Jew stems from his religion; the charge made to him by his God and his commitment to Him.

Job's ejaculation, "Though he slay me yet I will trust in Him," describes the Jews' stamina, fortitude, and faith, under the most terrifying circumstances in their history.

That Job truly caught the stalwart, indomitable, unbreakable, unshakable, spirit of his people, is verified and supported by the prayer recorded in the daily morning Service of the Traditional Prayer Book: "O look down from heaven, and see how we are become a mockery and derision among the nations; and accounted as sheep led to the slaughter, to be slain and destroyed, to be buffeted and reproached. **AND YET, FOR ALL THIS WE HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THY NAME.**"

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL RELIGION

RELIGION may be classified as Personal and Impersonal. Personal religion involves the emotions. It is subjective. It is an inward experience, a feeling of the heart and consists of a direct relationship between the religionist and his God. Personal religion is contemplative and mystical; it concerns itself with the destiny of the individual. It deals with one's inner security, his loneliness, his longing for companionship, his need of love, his desire for self fulfillment. Personal religion is expressed clearly and vividly in the Psalms. Whatever the problem of the Psalmist, whether it is sorrow or sadness, health or happiness that trouble him, he has someone to confide in, someone to listen to him, to give him relief, reassurance, promise, strength and solace.

Impersonal religion, on the other hand, involves the intellect. It is objective. It deals with conduct, action, with principles of ethics and morality. Impersonal religion concerns itself with the many and varied ills of society, man's relationship to man.

Impersonal religion is reflected in the Pentateuch and the teachings of the prophets. It is expressed by laws, commandments, precepts, and observances—all of which are primarily intended for the group; for the welfare of the group; for

the building of a better society. Impersonal religion makes its appeal to the individual not as an entity, but rather as an integral part of the group and for the sake of the group.

During the period of their First and Second Commonwealths, the religion of the Jews was on the whole that of the Impersonal type. It dealt generally with precepts and commands. These commandments invariably were directed to the nation, to the people.

In the long period of their dispersion, the Jews turned to the Personal type of religion. This change was natural and necessary. Living in an unfriendly world, suffering oppression and mortification, hounded and harassed, they needed love, comfort, promise, solace, and hope. They therefore turned inward. Their problems and interests were now individualistic, since there was no material purpose to live and strive for.

It is this individualistic, Personal religion, that we find in the Traditional Prayer Book, which next to the Psalm Book, until modern times, served as the chief medium by which the Jew communed with his God, and from which he received the necessary courage to go on living and fighting his battle for survival.

In our times, Jewry in the democratic countries, particularly in the United States, and especially Reform Jewry, whose theology is based on reason, with emphasis on prophetic Judaism, tends as in ancient days toward the Impersonal type of religion.

Reform Jews feel that through the opportunity of participating in national affairs, through the means of social action, Judaism, prophetic Judaism, can be of great service in the strengthening of democracy, in strengthening itself, and be a living force both for Jews and society as a whole.

The type of religion which addresses itself to the group, and expresses itself in the cold hard command of "Thus saith the Lord," is impersonal in its nature.

It is important to remember, however, that man is both rational and irrational. He is objective and subjective. To satisfy his heart as well as his mind, he requires both the Personal as well as the Impersonal element of religion in his life.

RITUAL AND SOCIAL ACTION

RITUAL is the symbol of religion as a nation's flag is the symbol of its history, ideals, and national purpose.

To say that ritual reflects a people's religion in its truest detail, would be incorrect because certain rituals are retained, honored, and practised, long after these have lost their meaning and relationship to the religion from which they emanate.

The God concept of a people changes more readily than their rituals do. This occurs because the development of the mind is to a large degree involuntary. What one does not learn from books, he picks up from his environment. There are numerous imperceptible forces that are constantly at work, shaping and influencing one's thoughts, attitudes, and ideas, without his being fully conscious of it.

Hence as the mind grows, so the God concept also grows and in due time is altered. Ritual, on the other hand, lags behind because through repetition it becomes habit and habits are not easily modified or broken. Thus it is not surprising to find intelligent, civilized people, clinging to customs and ceremonies, which have no relationship to their God idea, or the teachings of their religion.

A person, who has abandoned the tree as his God, and adopted the Sun as his object of adoration, will for a long time continue with rituals and ceremonies that are related to the tree.

Judaism, the Jewish religion, like the other religions, is also symbolized by ritual. In Judaism too, there are a host of practices which do not go hand in hand with its essence. As a matter of fact, there are some customs among the Jews that have been borrowed from other peoples and have been through usage Judaized. The breaking of a glass by the bridegroom at the conclusion of the wedding ceremony, for example, is one of those customs that is not of Jewish origin at all. "In Transylvania, the bride breaks a jar or dish in the presence of the local magistrate to signify acceptance of the bridegroom at the ceremony of betrothal. In several parts of Germany, she smashes a glass from which the guests have previously drunk. In Bohemia, she throws over her shoulder a glass or cup of wine proffered by her mother-in-law at the entrance to her new home, although there the interesting detail is added that if the glass breaks in the process, this betokens ill luck rather than happiness. In Hanover, Prussia, Thuringia and other areas of Germany, village children fling old crockery against the door of the bride's house; the higher the heap of broken fragments, it is said, the greater will be the prosperity of the newlyweds. The original purpose of this rite was symbolically to smash the powers of the demons and indeed, of all ill-wishers. This was a very common magical gesture in the ancient Near East."

The fact remains nevertheless, that meaningful ritual has its place in religion. It unites and solidifies a people. It serves as a visible reminder of their spiritual goals and challenges. It is a living force impelling people to act well and to think rightly.

"Ceremonies are the poetry of religion. They invest life at its various stages and periods with 'the beauty of holiness.' The need of such has been all the more felt by Judaism since images representing the deity have been scrupulously shunned; and the home and every day life of the Jew, was to be sanctified no less than the Temple, the ancient domain of the priest."

If ritual is a visible reminder of the high purposes of a religion, it also serves as a hindrance to its spirit. For the symbol too often becomes the object of adoration rather than the message it tends to communicate. That is why the prophets vigorously protested against meaningless ritual. Isaiah in (ch. 1. 11-17) has this to say about ritual:

“To what purpose is the multitude
of your sacrifices unto Me?

Saith the LORD:

I am full of the burnt-offerings
of rams,

And the fat of fed beasts;

And I delight not in the blood

Of bullocks, or of lambs, or of
he-goats

When ye come to appear before
Me,

Who hath required this at your
hand,

To trample My courts?

Bring no more vain oblations;

It is an offering of abomination
unto Me;

New moon and Sabbath, the
holding of convocations—

I cannot endure iniquity along
with the solemn assembly.

Your new moons and your
appointed seasons

My soul hateth;

They are a burden unto Me;

I am weary to bear them

And when ye spread forth your
hands,

I will hide Mine eyes from you;
Yea, when ye make many
 prayers,
I will not hear;
Your hands are full of blood.
Wash you, make you clean,
Put away the evil of your doings
From before Mine eyes,
Cease to do evil;

Learn to do well;
Seek justice, relieve the oppressed,
Judge the fatherless, plead for
 the Widow.”

Amos in (ch. 5:23-24) expresses his disapproval of ritual thusly:

“Take thou away from Me the noise
 of thy songs;
And let me not hear the melody of
 thy psalteries.
But let justice well up as waters,
And righteousness as a mighty
 stream.”

The above condemnations of ritual by Isaiah and Amos clearly reveal how ritual becomes the chief end of religion, and the moral law which the ritual is supposed to represent, is minimized, ignored, or completely forgotten.

The prophets were the guardians of the moral teachings, the noble principles, the essence of Judaism. They constantly reminded the people that the ritual was not an end in itself, but must, if it is to have any value, make itself felt in human relationships, in social action, social justice. How successful

the prophets were in their demands, is conjectural. One thing is certain, ritual persisted in Jewish life. It held the Jews together more than any other force or factor. Particularly is this true of the Jews in the Diaspora for nearly two thousand years.

Social action could be stressed by the prophet when the Jews lived in their own land under their own government. And the opportunities for social action in government, in politics, in economics, in dealing with other nations, are certainly ever present.

Through the cry and call for social action, progress is made. The nation is aroused, wrongs are righted, slowly but surely, partly in some instances, wholly in others.

In the Diaspora, for nearly two thousand years, Jews had little opportunity for social action. Dispersed all over the globe, under-privileged in the countries where they lived, having had no voice in national or communal affairs, the life of the Jew was limited. The attention of the Jew was concentrated on preserving his religion in a hostile world. As the prophet stressed social action in his day, to express the ideals of Judaism, and give meaning to it as a religion, so in the Diaspora the stress was on ritual. The Judaism of the Diaspora is therefore associated with a multitude of customs and ceremonies.

With the advent of the Reform movement in the 19th century, the voice of the prophet of old was sounded. The call was for less ceremony and greater emphasis on the essence, the eternal values, the basic ideals of the Jewish religion. In a word, "Reformism" urged "Prophetism." The political condition of the Jew changed in the 19th century. He was accepted into the total scheme of his host nation.

In our day, due to mass education, due to the spread of enlightenment, people are more sensitive to injustices wherever they prevail. The eye of the people in our day is not so

much on the religious symbol, as on the ethical, and the moral precepts of religion.

The modern Jew, and particularly the Reform Jew in America, has the chance to add his voice, to give his hand, and to offer his heart to all who strive for justice, love, mercy, and this he is doing.

Reform Judaism is not against ritual, as the prophets were not actually against meaningful ritual. Reform, like the prophets, is against rituals which do not mirror true, living Judaism, a Judaism that stands for Truth, Justice and Peace. Reform, like the prophets, is concerned with the implementation of religion in all areas of life. The motivating force in Reform, is SOCIAL ACTION—SOCIAL JUSTICE.

TRUE CONSCIENCE

WHAT act of a person may be considered as one which is motivated by, and flows from, his higher self or his true conscience?

There are two different standards by which men's consciences judge their acts. One standard is that of custom. The majority of men are governed by the moral opinion and attitude of their particular social set. Conscience in this instance, is no more than one's consciousness of the disapproval of his friends at his daring to break the ranks with them. In this situation conscience may be regarded more as social than moral. It is a low form of conscience serving to keep man as they are. It is timid of moral experiments; it is ever ready to persecute heretics and innovators and is apprehensive of new ideals, new patterns of behavior.

History is replete with examples of the lower type of conscience at work. It recalls the bitterness of the Roman citizen against those who condemned gladiatorial games. It reminds us of the animosity of the slave holders against the apostles of freedom; the cruelties to which Galileo was exposed because he claimed the earth was round; the death sentence imposed upon Socrates for teaching what he believed to be truth. These few examples should bring to mind numerous others from our own day; our own environment and personal experiences.

A second and higher standard to which conscience tends to grow is beyond the custom of the group, the nation, or the sect. It is at the same time individual and universal. Whatever others think or say or do, "This," says conscience, "is right for me." But it is made to be right for me because profoundly my act belongs to the universe, as I belong to the universe; it is good for all men, for all time.

In every society and every age both the higher and lower type of conscience of men are present and not necessarily in separate individuals but rather in the same person. There are times when a man will with all his might attempt to defend an outmoded ritual, practice, usage, or law, which he finds hard to forsake and which is also honored by his group, and, at another time, the same man will act in behalf of a universal cause at the sacrifice of friend and fortune. He will stand alone if necessary and so act as if he were representing all mankind. This is conscience expressed in its highest, noblest, purest form.

The mature man, however, is governed and guided by one standard of conduct, "the higher law." A man lives in a state of moral disquiet as soon as he feels and as long as he feels the pressure of that beautiful imperative, "LIVE the life of good will!"

In the hour when he obeys that higher law, the discord within him ceases, peace reigns in his soul, and he stands forth at his best.

ON CONFORMITY

“EVERY civilized man,” says Ahad Ha-Am in his essay ‘Two Masters,’ “lives all his life in the condition of the hypnotic subject, unconsciously subservient to the will of others. The social environment produces the hypnotic sleep in him from his earliest years. In the form of education, it imposes on him a load of various commands, which from the outset limit his movements, and give a definite character to his intelligence, his feelings, his impulses, and his desires. In later life this activity of the social environment is ceaselessly continued in various ways. Language and literature, religion and morality, laws and customs—all these and their like are the media through which society puts the individual to sleep, and constantly repeats to him its commandments, until he can no longer help rendering them obedience. . . . It may, therefore, be said with justice that every individual member of society carries in his own being thousands of hidden hypnotic agents, whose commands are stern and peremptory. ‘Such and such shall be your opinions such and such your actions.’ the individual obeys, unconsciously. His opinions and his actions are framed to order.”

Among the mass of men, there is little or no resistance to conformity. Could the history of opinions be fully written, it would be seen how large a part in human proceedings conformity has occasioned. The fear of non-conformity has

triumphed over all other fears. It is hard to say in what department of human life conformity has triumphed most.

We all cherish our habitual system of thought, and anything that breaks in upon it in a seemingly wanton manner, is annoying to us and likely to cause resentment. So our first tendency is to suppress the peculiar, and we learn to endure it only when we must, either because it is shown to be reasonable or because it proves refractory to our opposition. Thus every variant idea of conduct has to fight its way. As soon as anyone attempts to do anything unexpected the world begins to cry, "Get in the rut!"

Conformity is not as much of a hindrance to social welfare as some believe it to be. It has its value and serves a purpose. One of its functions is to economize energy. The standards which it presses upon the individual are often elaborate and significant products of cumulative thought and experience. And, whatever imperfections they may have they are, as a whole, an indispensable foundation for life. If I imitate the dress and manner of other people, I save so much mental energy for other areas and purposes. It is wiser that each should originate where he is specially equipped to do so, and follow others where they are better qualified to lead.

It is said with truth that conformity is a drag upon genius. However, it is equally true that its general action upon human nature is elevating. We get by it the selected and systematized outcome of the past. It is good to read Emerson's praise of self-reliance, in order that we may have the courage to fight for our beliefs, ideals and convictions; but we may also benefit from the words of Goethe who says that, "nothing more exposes us to madness than distinguishing us from others, and nothing more contributes to maintaining our common sense than living in the universal way with multitudes of men."

However, people of natural energy take pleasure in that

enhanced feeling of self that comes from consciously not doing that which is suggested or enjoined upon them by circumstances and by other persons. There is joy in the sense of self assertion; it is sweet to do one's own things. To brave the disapproval of men is like climbing along a mountain path in the teeth of the wind; one feels himself, and knows the distinctive meaning of his being. Who does not feel that it is a noble thing to stand alone? "Adhere to your own act" says Emerson, "and congratulate yourself if you have done something strange and extravagant and broken the monotony of a decorous age."

Conflict is a necessity of the active soul, and if a social order could be created from which it were absent, that order would perish as uncongenial to human nature.

The rational attitude of the individual toward the question of conformity or non-conformity in his own life, would seem to be: assert your individuality in matters which you deem important. To have a conspicuously individual way of doing everything is impossible to a sane person, and to attempt it would be to do one's self a grave injury, by closing the channels of sympathy through which we partake of the life around us. We should save our strength for matters in regard to which persistent conviction impels us to insist upon our own way.

Society, like every living advancing whole, requires a just union of stability and change, uniformity, and differentiation. Conformity is the phase of stability and uniformity, while non-conformity is the phase of differentiation and change—which transforms existing material in certain areas of human endeavour and renews human life.

HERO WORSHIP—A NEED

"**W**ORSHIP of a Hero," says Carlyle, "is transcendent admiration of a Man! . . . No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life."

Hero worship has a great place in all active, aspiring lives, especially in the plastic period of youth. We feed our characters, while they are forming, upon the vision of admired models; an ardent sympathy dwells upon the traits through which their personality is communicated to us—facial expression, voice, significant gestures, and so on. In this way those tendencies in us that are toward them are literally fed; are stimulated, organized, made habitual and familiar.

All will find in recalling their experiences, that times of mental progress, were times when the mind found or created heroes to worship, often owning allegiance to several at the same time, each representing a particular need of development. Goethe remarks that "vicinity to the master, like an element lifts one and bears him on."

If youth is the period of hero-worship, so also it is true that hero-worship more than anything else, perhaps, gives one the sense of youth. To admire, to expand oneself, to forget the rut, to have a sense of newness and life and hope, is to feel young at any time of life. "Whilst we converse with

what is above we do not grow old but grow young;" and that is what hero worship means. To have no heroes is to have no aspiration, to live on the momentum of the past, to be thrown upon the narrow self. "The pictures which feed the imagination," says Emerson, "in reading the actions of Pericles, Xenophon, Columbus, Bayard, Sidney, Hampden, teach us how needlessly mean our life is; that we by the depth of our living, should deck it with more than regal or national splendor, and act on principles that should interest man. . . ."

To be better men, to strive for higher and nobler things, to develop to the full, we need to have the images of men, who tower above us in mind, in heart, and in achievement.

THE DEEPER MEANING OF PERSONALITY

WHAT is personality? Is it true that a person's physical features constitute his personality? Is there not something more to man than his outward make-up? Is it not more correct to say that the externalities of a human being give him individuality, separate and distinguish him from other individuals?

We gravely err in interchanging the terms personality and individuality.

Let us dwell for a moment on the meaning of individuality. The individual is closely linked with the material world. He comes into being by a father and a mother, he has a biological origin, which is determined by family heredity as well as social heredity. Man as an individual is engulfed in himself, he struggles for life as he defends himself against the dangers that surround him. His aim is to preserve himself. Personality, unlike the individual, is not the offspring of a father and mother, is not determined by biological and social heredity. Personality determines itself from within, outside the object world; and this determination from within, out of freedom, is personality. While an individual is torn and divided within himself, inward unity and integrality are inherent in personality.

Personality is impossible without love and sacrifice. It is a task to be achieved. It involves inner determination, becoming

spiritually free; it involves self-realization by shaking off those social commands and environmental influences which serve only to thwart inner freedom; it involves reaching the highest, best self, realizing harmony, orderliness, and unity within oneself.

"Personality," says Nikolas Berdyaev, "is a wholeness and unity possessing absolute and eternal worth. An individual may be lacking in such wholeness and unity, he may be dis-integrated, and everything in him may be mortal. Personality is the image and likeness of God in man and this is why it rises above the natural life. Personality is not a part of something, a function of the genus or of society, it is a whole, comparable to the whole of the world. It is not a product of the biological process or of social organization; it cannot be conceived in biological or psychological or sociological terms. Personality is spiritual and presupposes the existence of a spiritual world."

The unity of personality is not the unity of a chain, or a series, or a train of recollections. It is the same kind of unity that we predicate of the universe itself. It is a unity into which the details and incidents fit; or rather, it is the unity of a living organism, all the cells and forces of which exist in harmony. Such is the unity of personality. The person takes up all that has ever happened to it, and by some vital power translates the events of the outward life into the unity of its personality.

It is in respect to this very aspect of unity that all human personality strikes us as in process of growth and not yet complete. We see the lines of the normal development toward perfect unity. The man at his best, and in his most normal and joyous hour, is most nearly one. At such times he is least subject to any sense of limitation. He is free, at his best. At his best, all his activities work normally in unison, he does precisely what he wills or pleases to do. God could not be more free.

Whenever we behold order or unity, whether in nature, or in a work of art, or in a growing person, we may discover some dominant force or factor that establishes and characterizes the unity. In the best specimens of human personality we tend to discover the ground of unity in the principle of good will.

The value and unity of personality does not exist apart from the spiritual principle. The spirit forms personality, enlightens and transfigures the biological individual and makes him independent of the natural order. In short, the life of personality is not self preservation as that of the individual but self development and self determination.

What is personality? Personality is not to be described in an inventory of peculiarities. Personality lies upward, in the range of the incomplete; the word points to all manner of possibilities and ideals. What is limited is not real personality. There is an element of the infinite in a person.

WHAT IS FREEDOM ?

GOETHE remarks in his autobiography, that, "the word freedom has so fair a sound, that we cannot do without it, even though it designate an error." Certainly it is a word inseparable from our higher sentiments, and if, in its popular use at the present day, it has no precise meaning, there is so much more reason why we should try to give it one, and to continue its use as a symbol of something that mankind cherishes and strives for.

What is freedom? It is man's basic, innate right, for self development, for development in accordance with the progressive ideal of life that we have in conscience.

Without freedom, individuals as well as nations remain in an arrested state, in a state of potentiality.

Man can only be his full self, when he is free to think, to envision, to act in consonance with his highest thoughts.

The possibilities of development are infinitely various. Development cannot be defined, either for the race or for individuals, but is and must remain an ideal, of which we can get only partial and shifting glimpses.

In fact, we should cease to think of freedom as something definite and final, that can be grasped and held fast once for all, and learn to regard it as a line of advance, something progressively appearing out of the invisible and defining itself. This vagueness and incompleteness are only what we

meet in every direction when we attempt to define our ideals.

What is progress? What is right? What is beauty? What is truth? The endeavor to produce final definitions of these things must be given up. However, we must recognize that the good in all its forms is evolved rather than achieved, is a process rather than a state.

The more one becomes conscious of his abilities, his fundamental rights as a human being, his concept of freedom changes, expands, and assumes new meaning.

Freedom and education are practically synonymous. as are ignorance and slavery. Where there is enlightenment, there is also freedom and by the same token, where one finds ignorance, slavery is its concomitant.

Freedom does not represent lawlessness, or anarchy. On the contrary to be free is to live a life that is disciplined, governed by rules and principles which check a person's primitive, elemental passions, desires and tendencies.

Are not all men born with substantial freedom, it is asked? Cannot everyone do as he pleases, or at least will and choose as he pleases? The contrary is true. The closer one lives to the life of an animal, the closer he is to all sorts of constraint and bondage. Freedom means not the absence of discipline, but the use of higher and more rational forms as contrasted with those that are lower or less rational. A free discipline controls the individual by appealing to his reason and conscience, and therefore to his self respect; while an unfree control, works upon some lower phase of the mind, and so tends to degrade him.

Besides being a right, symbolizing opportunity, representing man in the process of growth, freedom is also a force. It is a power. He who is free has the power to extend it to others, to share it, or, use it as an instrument to dominate and oppress. When freedom is shared, it unites hearts and hands to translate dreams into reality, to strive for self fulfillment.

Freedom is the basic right of man. It is from this right that all blessings flow. Upon this right, all progress depends. Peace, justice, and truth, depend upon freedom. Men and nations, cannot live without it. In striving, winning, and protecting Freedom, God and man are redeemed.

SLAVERY IN FREEDOM

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage;
If I have freedom in my life,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone, that soar above,
Enjoy such liberty.
(Lovelace)

FROM the very infancy of the human race, man struggles to win more of the basic rights due him as a human being and particularly that right from which all his other rights flow—namely freedom.

As man progresses and develops intellectually, he outlives the freedom of his day. He gains a deeper understanding of it; sees its need for further growth and self realization.

So, whatever is considered as freedom by one generation, is regarded as slavery by the next generation. Thus the goal of freedom is never attained. It is an ultimate goal and calls for a ceaseless unrelenting pursuit of it. In every period freedom needs to be re-defined, re-evaluated and re-gained.

Now it is perfectly conceivable for a person to live in a society of which freedom is its chief concern and yet find

himself in a condition of servitude. While freedom may be guaranteed to us from the outside, that is by the ruling power, by the government, for inner freedom, however, there is no guarantee. Inner freedom depends entirely upon the individual. To achieve inner freedom one needs to be master of his destiny; he needs to be able to control his actions, his thoughts, impulses, brute forces, present in all human beings.

"Man," says Nicholas Berdyaev, "is a tyrant over himself. . . . He tyrannizes over himself by false beliefs, superstitions, myths. He tyrannizes over himself by every sort of fear that is possible. He tyrannizes over himself by envy, by self-love resentment. . . . By his enslaving will man enslaves not only another but himself."

Inner freedom can be attained only when a person's life is guided by high ethical and moral principles. "The object of systems of morality," says Matthew Arnold, "is to save human life from being abandoned to passion or allowed to drift at hazard. This object they seek to attain by prescribing fixed principles of action, fixed rules of conduct."

As it is conceivable for one to be a slave in a free society, so it is also possible for one to feel free in a society where human liberty is curtailed; where tyranny is in power. In this situation too, it is that inner freedom which renders one free.

The man who enjoys inner freedom in a slave state, is the promise and the hope of redemption for all others. He is the light by which others are eventually led out of the darkness. He is the power and force which ultimately subdues the enslaver.

"Inner freedom," says Mordecai Kaplan, "determines a person's entire attitude toward his fellowman, toward his group, toward his momentary wishes and impulses. It makes his whole life one long protest against the brute forces that would interpose obstacles to the achievement of his worthiest aims."

HAPPINESS—MAN'S CHIEF PURSUIT

WHATEVER man does, whatever he plans, all his thoughts, are aimed at one paramount goal—happiness. However, only certain of his acts produce the desired end. It seems then that if we are to find happiness we must study carefully those acts that lead to the highest form of satisfaction or produce the fullest measure of happiness. What sort of acts shall one perform that will nourish him most, will make him strongest, and most completely a man? To know this, is to know the secret of happiness.

In observing life carefully, we note wherein its fullness consists. Life is rhythmical like everything in Nature. It consists in income and outgo, in inspiration and expiration. It is never in getting only, but it is also in expression. There must always be a free circulation of the life currents inward and outward or the life stagnates and perishes.

It is important, for example, that one fills every air cell of his lungs with oxygen. How is it done? First, he exhales every atom of air in his lungs and thus he takes in air. This is the law of the body and this law applies also to human relationship. If we wish to get, it is vital to remember that we must first give in order to get.

Satisfaction is more in the outgo than in the income, in doing than in getting, in expression of life power than in value received. Gratifying as it is to receive information and

knowledge, it is higher joy to teach than it is to be taught. It is an enjoyment to see pictures, but even indifferent painters get a greater enjoyment in painting for themselves than in seeing other men's paintings. It is a pleasure to hear music; it is a greater pleasure to be able to pour out one's whole soul in music.

It is a crude form of pleasure to fight and get justice; it is greater pleasure and far more gratifying to do justice.

To see a man at the height of his righteous activity is as if one saw the gleam of a divine life pouring through the personality of the man, as the electrical force pours over a live wire.

It seems that the most exalted and real form of activity is that of good will. In its highest terms of light and heart, it is called love. Whoever attempts to get love, fails breaking the universal law of the circulation of life. It is just the opposite with the giving or expressing of good will. Whoever lets his life go out into friendly thoughts, words and deeds, does not merely get love in return; he does better, he finds constant life and satisfaction in the outflow of good will. It is the nature of life that it must be expressed and kept in circulation. The highest happiness thus consists in the expression of the highest form of life, namely good will.

The emphasis and essence of happiness consists in going out of the self. When is man happiest? In the hours of his highest good will.

A man's true happiness is not somewhere else or at some distant time, it is here in so far as he has caught the secret of the life of good will.

On the basis of what was said about individual happiness, let us see if it does not also apply to society at large.

What course is there for society to follow that happiness may be attained? The road to happiness for the world at large, is the same as it is for the individual.

What is the happiest imaginable world, the kingdom of

God, which men have dreamed of for thousands of years? We look the wrong way, if we think it is a world crowded with well-fed populations living in palaces, sailing steam yachts, clothed in purple and silk. These things at best are only emblems, the externals of happiness. There might be plenty to eat for everyone, and yet there might be little sympathy or humanity. There are already communities where plenty exists among men of the narrowest sympathies. The outward or material things, as fast as they appear, create a demand for certain moral and spiritual forms of well-being to match them.

The happy world in truth is like the happy individual. It follows the same lines of natural development. Its "pattern is in heaven," that is, it depends upon an ideal conception. It is, however, a thoroughly natural and practical ideal, proceeding out of experience. Its pattern is suggested by the plainest facts which we may observe touching success in this present world—success in individuals, success in families and homes, the highest success yet reached in the most favored civilized communities, the common success already visible, toward the completion of which the democratic theory of the nation is the highest endeavor. The happy or perfect society in all its various patterns, both actual and ideal, is shown to be that in which its people are learning to live together with the utmost and heartiest expression of the life of good will to each and all. This ideal covers health, power, art, skill, intelligence, and humanity. The happy people do not live merely to get, but they live to utter and to accomplish their visions of social well-being. To feel the circulation of the common life, to sympathize in common endeavors, to bear a hand in the realization of grand common ends, is happiness.

The well-paid salesman, and the merchant in his gilded office, think that they are only buying and selling for themselves. Men are poor in happiness when they work, however successfully, without any good will. Man will do the same

work with a new heart, yes, and a new conscience, when to his skill and intelligence he adds, in every office and shop, the power of his humanity. The rigorous, beneficent law of the world is that a man can never be happy while he only seeks to be rich. His happiness lies in his good will to make the whole world rich.

The end and aim of all social endeavor is at last the welfare of the individual; for there can be no social happiness apart from the happiness of all the individuals who make up human society. On the other hand, the law of the world is that no individual can ever attain his growth as a man, enjoy true happiness, or even exercise thorough righteousness, and be in ethical good health, whose highest joy is not found to be in good will. In short, in order to have life, you must share and give life. This is the welfare at once of each one and of all.

It may be objected that all this is too much like a dream for an age in which armed camps, big guns and battleships are the distinguishing marks of its civilization. But it is no mere dream that society is still evolving into different and better conditions. This is the actual trend of a secular movement to be traced through hundreds of years. It is already a familiar thought that mankind, while maintaining the trappings and traditions of warfare, has substantially passed from a military period into a vast and growing industrial organization of the world. The average expectations of men are concerned with industry and commerce and not with war. The economic necessities of mankind are drawing all nations into closer ties, and with fuller international acquaintance, tend to make war intolerable. Democracy is essentially a co-operation of mankind in their efforts after happiness and welfare. The keynote of democracy is good will. Industry and commerce are as surely bound to be organized with reference to the welfare of all who work together, as political institutions are bound to develop in the direction of mutuality of

interests and the recognition of the manhood of the individual. The push of all the social forces goes this way.

In each period of human development it easily becomes the fashion to do the things, and take up the habitudes, which belong to the type of life which governs society at that time. It is easy and natural to be a soldier when military service is expected of all the men of one's own group or nation. It is equally easy and natural to be a railroad engineer, or a factory worker, or a miner, or a telegraph operator, when all one's fellows are so engaged. It is easy for merely industrial workers to measure all values in the terms of dollars. It will be equally easy and natural in a period of more mature and developed humanity to think of social and human values and to govern the conduct of really democratic politics and industry by the law of good will. Good will is only a higher form of Nature. Men will take satisfaction in obeying its rule. Good Will is the secret for individual happiness and the secret is the same for groups and nations.

SOME CAUSES FOR JEWISH SURVIVAL

WTHE survival of the Jew in the world," says Israel Bettan, "appears miraculous only to those who view the moving panorama of history but remain unaware of the hidden forces that make it move. They see a people dispersed over the entire habitable globe, disliked as alien by all and befriended as brother by none, treated like man in one age and slaughtered like beast in the next, and they marvel at the mystery the persistence of the Jew presents. To them, it is a curious riddle, insistent and baffling."

What were some of those hidden forces to which Israel Bettan refers, and which may be said to have been responsible for Jewish survival? In his famous poem, "Im Yesh Et Nafsecho Loda-at," the master Hebrew poet, Chayim N. Bialik, asks how and answers why the Jews survived:

"If you would know the spring whence strength of soul
Was drawn in evil days woeful as these
By those who gladly walked to meet their death,
Bending the neck beneath the biting steel . . .
If you would see the bosom where your people
Wept heart and soul their fill of bitterness,
With groans that surged as waters flowing forth,

Groans to sound terror in the deepest Hell
And sights to pluck the Devil cold with dread,
Shreiks to split rocks, but not the hardened hearts
of foes who better Satan . . .
Turn to the Beth Hamidrash, antic, old,
In the long nights of winter desolate,
In the summer days that scorch and flame with heat,
at noontide, dawn or in the twilight turn,
And if a miserable remnant yet
Is spared of God perchance today you'll see
In the deep shadows of the wall and dark
The corner there, fast by the chimney-piece,
A few stray sheaves—ghosts of much lost,
Some shrivelled Jews with parched and wizened face,
Jews of the Exile, burdened with its yoke,
Who lose their pain in faded Talmud page,
Their misery in Midrash tales of old.
And sing their sorrows in a Psalm of praise."

Jewish history, Jewish life, from its very beginning is a history of ideas, concepts, high values, great teachings all of which sprang from the Jews' special interest in God, religion, ethics and morality. Jews lived for ideals and readily gave their lives for them. They lived by and for the ideals of truth, justice, and peace. Upon these ideals, they believed the whole world depended for its existence.

They envisioned a world in the future guided by similar beliefs. They had faith that their views would eventually prevail. From their aspirations they drew strength, patience, and hope, vital, indispensable, elements for survival.

Jewish history is a record of a people, who time and again proved that the real power of a nation is not in its weapons of destruction, not in its physical might, but rather in its soul. "NOT BY MIGHT AND NOT BY POWER BUT BY MY SPIRIT SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS."

"Jewish history," says Jewish historian Simon Dubnow, "possesses the student with the conviction that Jewry at all times, even in the period of political independence, was pre-eminently a spiritual nation, furthermore, it inspires him with the belief that Jewry, being a spiritual entity, cannot suffer annihilation. . . . A creative principle permeates it, a principle that is the root of its being and an indigenous product of its history. This principle consists first in a sum of definite religious, moral philosophic ideals. . . . Next, this principle consists in a sum of historical memories recollections of what in the course of the many centuries the Jewish people experienced, thought and felt in the depths of its being."

Though the eminent singer Bialik, is not incorrect in ascribing the survival of the Jew to his heritage, his answer, nevertheless, is far from being exhaustive. Surely other factors contributed to Jewish survival. Dispersion certainly may be regarded as one of the causes.

When it happened that one Jewish community was dislodged from the land of its host, another land took them in and gave them a chance to rebuild their lives. If in one country they suffered economically, in another country they flourished. There was always a segment of Jewry somewhere in the world prepared to help those Jews that needed moral and financial support. Dispersion was a blessing in disguise. We can well imagine with what fate the Jewish community would have met if it had been completely concentrated in Germany during Hitler.

Ghetto life too, did its part in the struggle for Jewish survival. In the Ghetto, Jewish life was fortified. The world outside of the Ghetto was harsh, cold, oppressive. But within the Ghetto walls, there was warmth, understanding, unity, and a feeling of security. In the Ghetto, "The Jew had his own world; it was to him the sure refuge which had for

him the spiritual and moral value of a parental home. Here were associates by whom one wished to be valued, and also could be valued; here was the public opinion to be acknowledged by which was the aim of the Jew's ambition. To be held in low esteem by that public opinion was the punishment for unworthiness. Here all specific Jewish qualities were esteemed, and through their special development that admiration was to be obtained which is the sharpest spur to the human mind. What mattered it that outside of the Ghetto was despised that which within it was praised? The opinion of the outside world had no influence, because it was the opinion of ignorant enemies. One tried to please one's co-religionists and their applause was the worthy contentment of his life. So did the Ghetto Jews live, in a moral respect, a real full life. Their external situation was insecure, often seriously endangered. But internally they achieved a complete development of their specific qualities. They were human beings in harmony, who were not in want of the elements of normal social life. They also felt instinctively the whole importance of the Ghetto for their inner life, and therefore, they had the one sole care: to make its existence secure through invisible walls which were much thicker and higher than the stone walls that visibly shut them."

While the Ghetto narrowed the views of the Jew, it simultaneously deepened his reverence for the good and the true. His sense of righteousness was sharpened, his feeling for justice strengthened, his appreciation for companionship enriched. Heinrich Heine, the German poet who knew the Ghetto atmosphere in his childhood, caught its meaning for the Ghetto Jew in his poem "PRINCESS SABBATH." He told the fairy tale of the prince whom magic had cruelly transformed into a dog destined to live all week long in the midst of mire and hostility. With the approach of the Sabbath he became a prince again:

“And his father’s halls he enters
As a man, with man’s emotions,
Head and heart alike uplifted,
Clad in pure and festal raiment.”

His surroundings became transformed and he led a life of glory till nightfall of the Sabbath day:

“But the lovely day flits onward,
And with long swift legs of shadow
Comes the evil hour of magic—
And the prince begins to sigh.”

In the Ghetto, Judaism was preserved and Judaism—with its promise for a brighter future, preserved the Jew.

The force which perhaps did more than any other in helping Jews face life under the most trying circumstances, was their Messianic belief. “I suffer now, but what is this suffering when compared with the bliss and glory that await me in the future? I may die from the wounds inflicted upon me, but I shall live again when the Messiah comes and restores the Kingdom of Judah to its ancient glory. All these inquisitors, judges, and executioners will then stand at my door begging for admittance. All the nations of the earth will then be my servants, anxious to be the subjects of the King Messiah. They do not see it now, but I see and believe and hope, and hence can die in peace.”

The Messianic idea meant different things to individual Jews as well as Jewry as a whole in different periods of their history. However, that the Messianic concept represented hope, that it reflected the determination and perseverance of Jewry in every age, and under the most severe tests, no one ever disputed.

The Golden Age of the Jewish people was in the future.

"ON THAT DAY SHALL THE LORD BE ONE AND HIS NAME ONE." Other people gloried in their past. For Israel the past was one of tribulation and affliction. Israel counted on a promising future.

The Christians too, spoke of a Messiah, a Redeemer, but for them the Messiah was related to the nether world.

"Judaism did not dwell, in the exclusive way of Christianity on bliss in the afterworld, nor did it consider that the Messianic manifestation at the end of days would be a 'Day of Wrath and Destruction.' Steadfastness would ultimately receive its reward—in this world; a state of perfection would ultimately be attained—in this world. Thus there was in the Jewish outlook an inherent optimism. It believed in the perfectibility of humanity. It considered that to despair of redemption was one of the sins that would not be forgiven at Judgment Day. It thought of the Golden Age as being in the future, not in the past. The worse external conditions grew, the more profound and deep-rooted was the certainty of deliverance—and if we examine Jewish history in detail, we see that those few Jewish people who succumbed to the pressure of the environment did so not because they suffered more than the others, but because they gave up the optimistic conviction of ultimate deliverance. It was a conviction that in later times made it natural for Jews to take prominent part in movements for the abolition of war and the establishment of universal peace, indeed, in many movements aimed at improving the lot of mankind. This optimistic outlook is of the greatest significance too for the present age, when scientific developments have given a grim actuality to Christian conceptions of the Last Day and the Destruction of the World. As against this, Judaism teaches that to despair of the future is one of the gravest of all sins, because the perfect age, for which every man must work, still lies before us."

Another vital element which helped toward Jewish survival, is the ability of the Jew to constantly adjust himself to

new conditions. After the Temple was destroyed, and Palestine subdued by Rome, history records that Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakai took steps to substitute and replace the destroyed institutions with new and equally respected ones. The Sanhedrin, for example, which Jews looked upon as the Central Legislative and Judicial body of which Rome had forbidden the revival, was quietly substituted through the labors of Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakai by seventy-one scholars, the number that constituted the original Sanhedrin. This body was organized under similar officers and performed the same functions as the original body, despite the fact that it was not recognized by Rome. For the Temple, too, a substitute was found—the Synagogue. And the sacrificial rites were replaced by prayer. The destruction of the Jewish commonwealth was replaced by a spiritual nobility of the mind and the spirit.

In our day too, efforts are being made in the direction of adjustment, hence the different forms of Judaism and Jewish practices. This ability and drive for orientation, helped immensely to perpetuate Jewish life.

Finally, in mentioning the possible factors which served to keep Jewry alive for so long a period, we dare not ignore the tremendous role of Jewish education. The lofty conception which the Jewish people had of education is reflected in the following Talmudic quotation:

“Rabbi Judah Ha-nasi II sent out Rabbi Hiyya Bar Abba, Rabbi Assi and Rabbi Ammi to learn through an investigation of all the villages and towns of Palestine, whether they had schools.

They came to a place where there was no schoolmaster. They asked the Head of the community to summon the town's watchmen. The night watchers were brought into their presence.

‘They are no profit to a city,’ the Rabbis said, ‘They are only an expense.’

‘And whom do you call watchmen?’ the Rabbis were asked.

‘The schoolmaster,’ they responded. ‘A town without schools will not be guarded by the Lord’ (y. Hagidah, 1).

Study, learning, education, preceded all other duties for the Jews. An ignoramus, the rabbis stressed, cannot rise to the level of piety. “And Thou Shalt Teach Them Diligently Unto Thy Children,” was a precept that was burnt into the Jewish soul.

Jewish education stressed the importance of character, worthy deeds, admirable conduct. It concentrated on teaching a way of life; on helping one to become a well integrated citizen of his community and the world.

No people on earth have valued learning more and have sacrificed as much for education as did the Jews. In study, they found the way to God, to worthy deeds, but even more; through study they developed the fortitude to live in unfriendly surroundings, in antagonistic environments. Study helped them escape the dismal present, and conjure up a more glorious future. In study they found purpose and meaning to life and the ability to survive.

VERY SIGNIFICANT IS THE LEGEND WHICH FORMED PART OF THE OLD HOMILY: “NO PHILOSOPHERS HAVE ARISEN IN THE WORLD LIKE BALAAM THE SON OF BEOR AND OENOMAOS OF GADARA. ALL THE HEATHENS ASSEMBLED TO THE LATTER AND SAID TO HIM, ‘TELL US HOW WE MAY SUCCESSFULLY CONTEND AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL.’ HE ANSWERED, ‘GO TO THEIR SYNAGOGUES AND SCHOOLS, AND IF YOU HEAR THERE THE CLAMOUR OF CHILDREN REHEARSING THEIR LESSONS, YOU CANNOT PREVAIL AGAINST THEM: FOR SO THEIR PATRIARCH (ISAAC) ASSURED THEM, SAYING, “THE VOICE IS THE VOICE OF JACOB AND THE HANDS

ARE THE HANDS OF ESAU" (Gen. XXVII, 22), MEANING THAT WHEN JACOB'S VOICE IS HEARD IN THE HOUSES OF ASSEMBLY, THE HANDS OF ESAU ARE POWERLESS.' " (Gen. R. LXV, 20).

Thus we see, that not one cause in particular, but rather many combined, helped Jewish survival. Moreover, the causes already stated, and those still omitted, do not fully supply the answer to the eternal riddle.

MATERIAL PROGRESS AND MORAL LAG

"**D**IE happy," said the Greek poet Pindar, "thou canst not climb the brazen heaven." Man's ability is limited, only the gods could climb the brazen heaven, Pindar hinted. But man has mastered the secrets of the gods. He can climb the brazen heaven. He soars above the earth faster and to greater heights than the eagle; he plunges into the depths of the sea where no fish can follow. He has in a degree conquered the earth, the sea, the air, and before long will boast of having conquered space.

There seem to be no bounds to man's audacity. Intoxicated by the advances he has made in biology and medicine, he dreams of discoveries which may arrest the processes of decay in the living organism, prolong indefinitely the period of human life, and even perhaps deliver us from the doom of our mortality.

Man's achievements in the last fifty years are simply phenomenal. However, while in our knowledge and practice of the laws which govern the physical universe we are living in the twentieth century, in our knowledge and practice of the principles which govern the world of man and of human relationships, we are living two thousand years ago. We have advanced tremendously in material power, but very little if at all in power of intellect or of moral responsibility.

We have developed engines with little thought to the

steering gear or controls. The vast complicated machinery of the present-day world demands of us the mentality of supermen.

Civilization is a plant which requires tender and thoughtful nurture. It does not consist alone, as many think, in factories airplanes, missiles and high explosives.

If the power which we now command, is not to be employed for our own destruction, if it is to be used to enrich human life and raise the level of human well being, then there must be more love, sympathy, and understanding, among the children of the human race.

Our concentration is too one sided, we must learn to see life as a whole. "Is not life more than meat and the body more than raiment?" There is much that the past has to offer for the ennoblement of the human spirit.

We have not outgrown the teachings of Socrates and Plato, Moses and Jesus, Isaiah and St. Francis of Assisi. There are a thousand voices calling to us from the past, warning and restraining us, bidding us onward. We cannot afford to stop our ears to them. We cannot afford to be ignorant of them. There are a thousand noble spirits who have dragged themselves from the mud, climbed the heights, and caught the larger view. We cannot afford to forego their companionship. We cannot afford to lose the treasures of the human spirit. In order that we might save what we have accomplished on the material end, we need also to develop our spiritual end. And for this purpose we must have faith that it can be done and the will and determination to do it. We must cultivate the faith and belief in man's ability to rise above himself as shown by some of the heroic figures in the annals of ethics, morality and religion. These should be our light, our guide, our inspiration, in these perilous times. We are experts in the creation of means more and more means but we are not so certain of our ends. We have the means for living and making our lives easier and more comfortable but unfortunately we

lack the ends for life. Our goals are hazy; our purpose undefined-unclear.

"History" said H. G. Wells, "is a race between education and catastrophe." By this Well's no doubt meant, that man either improve morally or be destroyed by the god of power which he created.

The Kingdom of heaven is not outside of ourselves but within us, and whether we help to bring it to pass depends upon what we think and say and do.

There is in our nature something which we may think of as God, an instinct for perfection, desire to leave the world better than we find it, which we may safely regard as our pillar of fire by night and our pillar of cloud by day. "The nature of man," says Aristotle, "is not what he was born as but what he is destined for."

Man's ability to conquer human nature is equal to his ability to conquer nature. Individuals have done it. It is imperative for man's survival that large numbers, yes, that nations apply themselves to this task.

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